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SOME PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION

! It is sometimes pointed out that there are several varieties of translation, linguistically speaking, ranging from the so-called 'literal' or morpheme by morpheme variety, most commonly found in school-boys' Latin trots, to what an imaginative soul has called 'transcreation', which is an attempt at the transposition of the language and culture of A to the language and culture of B: that is, by finding equivalent instances and perhaps even systems in B for examples or systems in A. Let me make an introductory comment on these various types, beginning with the opening lines from Vergil's *Aeneid* as an example:

Arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris
Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit
litora....

A literal translation of this might be:

Arms and the man I sing, of Troy who first from the coast
to Italy, by fate compelled, and Lavinia has come to the
shore....

It doesn't make a great deal of sense, for two obvious reasons. First, Latin word order, or at least the word order of Latin poetry, is not the same as that of English. And secondly, the phrase structure of Latin poetry is not the same as that of English. Latin, as a highly inflected language, defines the relationships of the elements of the phrase to one another by means of case markers, and so on. Thus, in terms of word order, the Latin can be loosely arranged and still remain comprehensible. For example, it is clear by the

gender markers that *primus* and *profugus* are in relationship to *virum* and *qui*, though the phrase "the man who first, compelled" is divided up in the Latin by three other elements. It can easily be seen, I think, that what is potentially ambiguous in English is not so in Latin; this ambiguity can be, as we shall see, useful in English poetry.

Secondly, there are the phrase and the sentence types of translation, which I shall lump together here, since they function roughly the same way for all European languages. To illustrate this, let us rearrange Vergil's opening lines, putting together the morphologically defined (i.e., by case, gender, and number) Latin phrases as they are syntactically defined in English:

I sing of arms and the man who first, compelled by fate, from the coast of Troy has come to Italy and the Lavinian shore.

This makes sense, and it has a certain Latiny flavour which is not wholly unpleasant. Many people translate this way certain texts and for certain purposes. And often it works out, since there is a reasonably close relationship among the European languages. But even within these bounds, there is sometimes difficulty, and this difficulty is of two types: lexical interpretation and cultural context. Let us look at the example from Martial, which Dudley Fitts uses in his essay in Reuben Brower's book *On Translation*¹:

Quod nulli calicem tuum propinas,
Humane facis, Horme, non superbe.

The morpheme translation would be something like:

As to no one your cup you pass,
You do humanly, Hormus, not arrogantly.

This makes good enough sense, although as poetry it lacks a good bit. In fact, as Fitts suggests, it misses the point of the verse entirely. The verse hinges on two words: *propinas* and *humane*. The problem with *propinas* is cultural: to understand the wit, we must know that it was the Roman custom to pass the wine-cup around the table. Yet this is not too far removed from us: this is the kind of difficulty which is compounded the farther removed from one's own culture is the work which one is trying to translate. More important is the

word *humane*. As Fitts says, "humanly" can mean any of several things: being greedy is human, and Hormus may not be passing the cup because he wants it all to himself. Being loutish is also human, and Hormus may not pass the cup because he is ill-mannered. Thus the real meaning of the word is held in suspense until at the end of the verse it is defined as *non superbe*, "not arrogantly, not haughtily". Hormus thus does not pass the cup because he is humane; in the English sense of the word: because he has pity on the others, and the assumption from this is that he is unclean and knows it.

Fitts' first translation, although it clings masterfully to the hendecasyllabic meter, loses the play with the words almost completely:

Hormus, you do not pass the cup when toasting.
Some say 'rudeness', but I applaud your hygiene.

His second translation, however, while straying rather far from Martial's ordered verse, seems to me far better, because the tension, the fun, the play remain. The spirit of the thing is there:

You let no one drink from your personal cup, Hormus,
When the toast go round the table.
Haughtiness?
Hell, no.
Humanity.

If this is a valid principle of judgment, then, I think it can be seen that the ease of capturing the spirit of the verse will vary widely, depending upon the simplicity or complexity of the linguistic structure and its relationship to the meaning of the text, and upon the degree of familiarity of the concept expressed to the translator and to the audience. On the other extreme is the cryptogram, such as that which occurs in one of the texts I shall mention, in which there are at least two levels of meaning: the preservation of such devices in English is most vexing, if not downright impossible.

This on the linguistic side. On the cultural level I should like to try to be a little more detailed, and to try to distinguish between certain problems of translation which arise in working with a medium which represents a 'classical' culture, in this case Sanskrit, and those which arise in working with what, for lack of a better word, I shall call 'romantic' literature and the culture it represents: in the present

Please bear in mind that I intend this to be suggested only that. Please bear in mind also that the classical-romantic distinction is a straw man, which merely attempts to provide a handle by which to grasp the matter.

In my mind, the term 'classical' implies 'tradition', while the term 'romantic' means 'experimental' or 'personal'. There are lots of other functions which come to mind: a writer's concern with form as a part of tradition, as opposed to a writer's concern with personal expression, dictated either by the matter which he is treating or by his own preferences and prejudices or by his personal choice. Or being a character, meant both as the writer adopting a role in the presentation of his material and in the roles played by his people, and personality, which again means the extent to which the writer inserts himself into his material and the lack of stylisation of the people he depicts. Or, to put that same thing another way, as mask versus face (although this becomes a little complex, for as Oscar Wilde says, true expression of self can come about only when a mask is being worn). Or again, as determinism versus chaos, that is, Hume's idea that the more control the gods, or fate, or whatever it is called, have over man's destiny in literature, the more classical it is; chaos is where man controls himself. And so on.

In the case of India, the matter becomes further complicated when we consider that there are degrees of classicism and romanticism. There are within the regional traditions of Bengal and in all the regional traditions of India degrees of the influence of the classical Sanskrit tradition, depending on the time, the place, the subject, and the extent of learning of the writer; and there are as many points on the continuum of tradition in the regional literatures as there are examples of all of these. And further, there is within Bengal itself a parochial, if you will, classicism and romanticism partially independent of Sanskrit. The Vaisṇava lyrics, for example, established an independent classicism, with its own forms and conventions (some of which, though hardly all, are drawn from Sanskrit), its own images, symbols, and meters. For purposes of simplicity, however, let us lump both 'great' and 'little' classical traditions together and oppose them for the moment to the romantic, which will be the village or folk literature.

There are, in India, various historical types of relationship between these two bodies of literature which I must suggest even at the

risk of straying too far afield. Throughout history, of course, Sanskrit has existed as the classical and learned language. (According to Sukumar Sen the interaction between Sanskrit and the regional languages seems to have been through the medium of Apabhraṃśa, which carried certain types of themes, such as that of Behula and Lakhindar, which we shall consider in a moment, into the regional literature, and certain formal devices, such as rhyme and new metric patterns, into the classical. The best example of the latter is the 12th century *Gita-govinda* of Jayadeva, whose poems were as much related to Apabhraṃśa as they were to the Sanskrit lyric tradition, though they were written in Sanskrit.²) This then was one type of interaction.

A second type is perhaps better called reaction. Sanskrit, in the high classical period of Indian culture was not only the religious language but was the language of learning, the language of men of scholarship and sophistication. As time went on, the ritual specialists, particularly the Brahmins, more and more assumed the language as their own, or at least were thought of as doing so. To this there was a reaction. All across northern India in the 14th and 15th centuries there burst forth a romantic enthusiasm, a revival of devotional and ecstatic religion, the *bhakti* movement. There was an ancient saying in Bengal, that 'whoever listens to the eighteen purāṇas or the *Rāmāyaṇa* recited in the *bhāṣā* [i.e., the vernacular language] will surely be cast into hell.' But in the 15th century Kabir wrote: 'Pandits talk in Sanskrit alone, and call those who use the *bhāṣā* ignorant fools . . . but *bhakti* through the *bhāṣā* gives strength, and leads one to salvation. Sanskrit is as the water of a well, but the *bhāṣā* is like a running brook.'³ The *bhakti* movement was at least in part a movement of unlearned people. Whether or not it was in deliberate reaction to Brahmanical tradition, they made their devotional songs in the regional, spoken languages. And those learned people who did know Sanskrit also composed in the vernacular, in order to speak to the people who were the vitality and generating power of the movement. As I have suggested in regard to the Vaiṣṇava songs, in a sense the *bhakti* movement developed its own classicism; but this was in terms of the vernacular languages.)

(The third type of interaction was direct borrowing by the regional literatures of forms and themes from the classical Sanskrit tradition. In Bengal, such borrowing was greatly stimulated by the fact that

At that time chieftains who ruled the land for so long a period knew Sanskrit and did not care to learn any. They did however know Bengali and their court poets wrote in that language. More than that, these chieftains commissioned poets to translate (or, perhaps more accurately, to make new versions of) some of the great works of Sanskrit in the vernacular: parts of the epics and many of the more popular Purāṇas. This gave rise to what is sometimes known as the Bengali revival; its result was that Sanskrit forms and themes were taken wholesale into Bengali.

This was the historical situation. Let us return then to our categories and look at a couple of examples. For the first, let us take the Vidyāsundara story as told by the 18th century poet Bhārat-bhāṣya. The story, in very brief outline, is this:

Sundar was a prince of Kanchi in South India, and Vidyā was the daughter of a king of Bengal; she had made a vow that she would marry only him who would be able to defeat her in debate. As she was very beautiful and learned she is both pursued and unmarried for a long while. When he heard of her beauty and her vow, Sundar came out to Bengal; he saw the girl and, infatuated and impatient, broke into her apartment by digging a tunnel underneath the wall. He seduced the girl and impregnated her. This news was carried to the king and queen by Vidyā's attendants; the palace guards were alerted, and in a farcical scene Sundar is apprehended as he emerges from the tunnel, and is thrown into prison. He is about to be executed, but is saved by the intervention of his personal deity, the goddess Durgā.

The story, as nearly as I can gather, has little precedent in Sanskrit in the sense of the forthright and even delighted way in which the scenes of seduction are presented (although the paraphernalia described by the Kāma-sāstra is all there—music, pān, camphor, erotic poetry, and the rest), in the fact of Vidyā's pregnancy, and in many other details. But in many other ways the text is very close indeed to the classical model. First of all, the imagery:⁴

- a. The female swan of beauty was brightly displayed in her pair of slender legs.
- b. He who has never seen her thinks that a swan is graceful.
- c. Her hips were rods of plantain trees for the peacock of dalliance.

B: Her hips are like young plantain trees, more graceful than those of a deer.

S: Her line of curls was like a row of black bees upon the lotus of her face.

B: Her brows are like black bees upon the lotus blossom.

S: Your long-lashed lotus-eyes, lustrous and meek; your nose a tila-bud, your teeth like rows of kunda-petals . . .

B: Her eyes like lotus-blossoms, her nose a tila-flower . . . her teeth like kunda-petals.

The catalogue could go on and on: Vidyā's hair is like a glossy black snake, her walk is like that of an elephant (an image which has always charmed me), etc. It was not necessary for Bhāratchandra to draw directly from any particular poet. The imagery is traditional and stylised, and Bhāratchandra, like other court poets both Sanskrit and Bengali, took it over lock, stock, and barrel. Bhāratchandra is also Sanskritic in language. In fact, a fair amount of the poem is written in Sanskrit, and the rest in a very highly Sanskritised form of Bengali. He is very conscious of the *rasa* of his poem (which is two-fold, *hāsyā* and *śṛṅgāra*), and conscious of his role as poet, not inserting himself in any way which will disturb the unity of the *rasa*. And he uses Sanskritic devices: elaborate puns and cryptograms, for instance, in which three or four levels of meaning are maintained over several lines. This is perhaps not as elaborate a use of *śleṣa* as that which the 12th century Sanskrit poet Kavirājā used in his *Rāghavapaṇḍaviya*, in which the stories of the *Mahābhārata* and of the *Rāmāyaṇa* are simultaneously told. But it is elaborate enough, and, as I suggested, impossible to translate.

To return to our original classification, then, the *Vidyā-sundara* poem falls within that part of the classical tradition of Bengal which is a part of the classical tradition of the rest of India—that of Sanskrit. If you will, it is romantic in its slightly deviant story line and in the fact that some of its characteristics—its language, meter, rhyme, etc., are Bengali. But in no basic way is it deviant from the classical literature. To see this more clearly, let us compare it briefly with another text, one at the opposite end of the scale, a long folk-poem in eulogy of the goddess of snakes, called Manasā, who is as far as I know peculiar to Bengal. The story, in simplification equal

acted which was perpetrated on the *Vidyā-sundara* tale, is this:

Manasa, the goddess of snakes, is the daughter of Śiva. She is feared by men, but wants to establish her worship in the world. She therefore decides that the only way in which she can do this is to terrify the world of men with her power; so she starts out on a reign of terror. She goes first to the cowherds, and forces them to worship her, and then to other groups. But there is one man, a powerful king (or, some say, a merchant), by name Cando, who is a devotee of Śiva, and will not worship this alien divinity. So Manasa brings all her power of destruction to bear on him. She kills his six sons. She sinks his ships, laden with rich cargo, in the sea. She destroys his crops. But, like Job, he will not submit. He waves his staff and smashes the pots sacred to the goddess and shouts insults at her. Finally, a seventh son is born to him; his wife begs Cando to worship Manasā, lest she take this last son also, but he refuses. He builds an iron house, in which he puts his son and his son's new bride. But on their wedding night Manasā sends a tiny, deadly snake to enter through a chink left in the wall, and the snake kills the son. The bride, Behujā, takes the rotting corpse upon her lap and sets herself adrift on a raft in the river, determined to float until she finds Manasā and persuades the goddess to bring her husband back to life. This she does, though the flies lay their eggs upon her husband's rotting body, though men along the bank try to seduce her; and her husband is restored to life. And finally, in joy, Cando agrees to worship Manasā—but he does so with his left hand, his right hand behind his back, and his face averted.

In terms of the classical tradition, Cando is not a type. He is a personality, a romantic figure who, despite the power of the goddess and all the misery she brings upon him, clings to his own belief, depends upon his own strength and his own destiny. Many of the images of the poem are impressionistic and descriptive in a most unstylised way. For example:

Great fish with heads and gills like blacksmith's bellows . . . and all around the raft the crocodiles, their backs like saws, rose and sank down again.

Or again:

To the *ghāt* had come a huge black dog, wearily, his ears hanging down, extending his long tongue to drink. Easily do dogs smell

rotten flesh—it seems to them as the smell of flowers does to us—
and as the raft came near to him he began to tremble.

But it is not an entirely neat example of the romantic. There are many Purāṇic stories interspersed through the text. And some characters are stock: Behulā, for example, is the prototype of the true wife like Sitā or Sāvitrī, who by her devotion to her husband brings about a reversal of a tragic situation, and whose devotion must by the laws of *dharma* be rewarded.)

(I have taken a great deal of time to suggest an obvious point. Elder Olson, in his critical book on the poetry of Dylan Thomas, suggests that there are three types of symbols, which he calls “natural, conventional, and private”.⁵ Natural symbols, he says, are *light* as good or knowledge, *dark* as evil or ignorance, *warmth* as life or comfort. He feels that such things are archetypal, which presents some difficulties. Natural symbols, of course, are assumed under both classical and romantic types of literature. Conventional symbols in Thomas, Olson says, are those drawn from cartography, astronomy (as in the “Altar-wise by owl-light” sonnets), games and sports, legend and myth—in other words, references which will be familiar to reasonably well-read and educated people who are within the cultural tradition of the poet himself; such references would not necessarily, it should be stressed, be familiar to those who are outside that tradition, except perhaps in an intellectual sense to those who have made a study of the culture in question. This is the type of symbol which will occur in the pan-Indian Sanskrit classicism and, though perhaps it will be different in some details, within the parochial Bengali classicism.) And, thirdly, there are those symbols which are entirely personal: in Thomas, says Olson, these are such as *wax* as a symbol of dead or mortal flesh, *scissors* or *knives* as symbols of birth, etc. Such must be understood either from the internal evidence of a particular poem or by examination of the consistent use of it throughout the corpus of the poet in question: there is no further referent. The extreme of this type, when a poet uses a particular symbol only once, is naturally ambiguous and can be fully understood only by the poet himself. This would be the extreme of romanticism. In the classical tradition, it will be remembered, the poet cannot insert himself or personality in any way, but must work within the conventions accepted and understood both by himself and by his audience.)

There is one further point. In terms not of symbols but of narrative and straightforward description, translatability is potentially complete. The sole difficulty which arises is when the object of the description is unfamiliar to the audience which reads the translation, or when there is no one-to-one lexical correspondence between the languages in question. But theoretically, the translatability of a text can be described this way (here substituting the term 'regional' for Olson's 'personal', in order to make a fit with the larger situation; a purely personal text could not be understood anyway):

	Classical	Romantic
Natural symbols and descriptions	x	x
Conventional symbols and descriptions	x	
Regional materials		x

If this is accurate, the comprehensibility of a particular piece can be thought of as being on one of three levels. Straight descriptive verse or verse which uses natural symbols should be highly translatable, whether the piece in question falls by other criteria into the classical or the romantic slot. The second level, and by all odds the most complex one, is that of convention, for as we have seen, in a particular piece of Indian literature the sources and types of the literary conventions are themselves complex: the question would be whether the piece falls within the Sanskrit convention, the Bengali convention, or a mixture of the two, as in the *Vidyā-sundara*. The third category would be translatable to the extent to which both translator and audience know the region in question, in this case Bengal. Obviously, most works of literature do not fall entirely within one category or another; in most, the three are mingled. Let us look at a couple of examples. The first is from a modern Bengali poem by Buddhadeva Bose; it is called in translation "A Parting":⁶

After the first thousand nights we had to part.
Rain fell on the river, the water rose in flood.
Between the bamboos, like a hidden hope,
one or two fireflies fitfully gleamed.
The sky was closed in cloud, but not quite,
for the wound throbbed sometimes, as lightning flicked
and a long low moaning perished in the pain
of trying to utter the inexpressible.

Urgent, uncertain, ruthless, full of violence,
the water foamed and spread and disappeared
into the final silence of the fates
when I left my love in the hand of God.

The imagery is mostly what Olson would call natural: a dark, rainy sky, with darkness a symbol of lostness, or death, or pain—the poet's love is dying; fireflies, symbols of hope, gleam and die away. But let's take a closer look. The natural symbols, or some of them, are also conventional and an understanding of the classical convention is necessary for their full comprehension. Let us compare a Sanskrit verse from the poet, Yogeśvara, which is in no sense unusual:

The sky is smeared with clouds. One sees them only for a moment in the lightning, for the moon and stars are asleep. After the downpour the soft wind blows, carrying the scent of kadamba trees wet with rain. At midnight the sound of frogs break forth. How can the wanderer live these nights?⁷

The meaning of the verse is not really that the storm makes it impossible for the wanderer to go abroad: the verse at this point is not merely descriptive, but conventional, and its meaning must be understood entirely within the tradition. This is perhaps best explained by the citation of another verse, this one from Bengali; it is a Vaiṣṇava poem sometimes signed "Vidyāpati":

O my friend, my sorrow is unending. It is the rainy season, and my house is empty. The sky is filled with seething clouds, the earth with rain, and my love is far away. Cruel Kāma pierces me with his sharp arrows: the lightning flashes, peacocks dance, the frogs and waterbirds, drunk with delight, call constantly, and my heart is bursting. Darkness fills the earth; the sky lights restlessly. "Vidyāpati" says, O Rādhā, how will you pass this night without your Lord?⁸

The meaning, then, in this context, is that in India the rainy season is the time for lovers to be together: the air is cool, the wind sweet-scented. Thus, it is the more poignant when lovers are apart. Buddhadeva Bose, then, brings more strongly his feeling at the loss of his beloved by the use of this purely conventional symbol, of the Sanskrit convention. But there is a third level here also. The second line of the verse: "Rain fell on the river, the water rose in flood," re-

met me forcefully of one of the most popular Bengali nursery rhymes—*Topi pora topur topur nodi elo bān* (which, said Tagore, was the *lala dhya mantra* in his childhood). This then would suggest to a Bengali (and only to a Bengali (or a non-Bengali who had the luck to learn the particular rhyme) the hope of childhood, and with it the awareness of change, of decay in life, of the despair which is always latent in hope, as is death in life.

We are left with the following situation: that an understanding of modern Indian literature, or at least of a modern Indian poem, requires an understanding of at least two sets of conventions, plus, for full appreciation, an intimate knowledge of the place and culture from which the poem comes. Thus, the extreme of the argument would be, no one but a Bengali could fully understand a fully Bengali poem. But fortunately few poems are fully Bengali, or fully personal. The songs of the Bāuls are often considered typically Bengali; for example, the following song of Lālan Phakir:

I am sinking in a sea of dense and frightful darkness—
 be merciful! catch me quickly—
 take me by the hair
 and pull me to the other shore.
 Six are the sailors who steer my mind
 to evil reefs
 and at the river's every landing place
 push me down beneath the waves of being
 down to hell.
 O helmsman! Pull me out!
 Whose am I, and who is mine —
 I understand and do not understand;
 I have fallen, and see no way ...
 And at the last there is no other way.
 I pray to you —
 Your name is Mercy, and as Mercy
 Let me know you.

But one is reminded of a poem from a very different tradition, Matthew Arnold's "The River":

A wanderer is man from his birth.
 He was born in a ship
 on the breast of the river of time ...
 And the width of the waters, the hush
 of the grey expanse where he floats,

freshening its current and spotted with foam
 as it draws to the ocean, may strike
 peace to the soul of the man on its breast —
 as the pale waste widens around him —
 as the banks fade dimmer away,
 as the stars come out, and the night wind
 brings up the stream
 murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

There are in the Bāul poem, it must be admitted, many romantic or regional factors. But the image of the river of life or time, while it cannot be considered natural (there are those with no experience of rivers), is comprehensible to others.

This is perhaps enough on this point. Let us turn briefly to another, which is worked over more frequently, and on the basis of which some people would deny that there is any possibility of translation at all. That is that, again in theory, (there can be no direct lexical correspondence between one language and another (in fact, that there is no exact correspondence in meaning between the same word in a single language used at different times, the element of time giving a different connotation to the repetition). Without taking this somewhat extreme position, it can be easily shown that certain difficulties do exist. Here is a *kaviwalla* song of Ram Baṣu:

I was a girl, it was good,
 I had no longing, knew no desire,
 I knew no husband, nor the joys of love,
 the lotus of my heart was closed.
 But now the hundred-petalled lotus, closed and warm,
 has opened to the touch of time.

In the original Bengali poem everything is fine until one gets to 'Aekhon sei śotodol *mudito* komol' in the fifth line. The word *mudito* has two meanings: "closed" and "happy", and here is the nice ambiguity of the poem. If one reads the word as "happy", the poem takes on an entirely different meaning: that the girl as a virgin was content, and that with her maturity has come a husband or a lover who has taken her happiness with her virginity. This sort of thing can become complicated.

In a Hindi poem by the poet Surdās there is a complete double meaning, each word and image applying both to the river Yamunā

and to the beloved of Kṛṣṇa. It is almost impossible to sustain the poem in English translation; one is almost forced to use the word "like", which automatically destroys half the effect of the poem.

The Dark River looks darker;
O traveller, as you go, tell Hari that she has been scorched,
in the fever of separation from him.
She has fallen to the earth from her
mountain bed, and trembles in the waves.
Her sand banks are medicine
for her over-flowing streams of anguish.

One final point, more or less that with which we began: (that there are certain necessities of language in literature, and certain poetic potentialities of any given language. Daniel Ingalls points out in a paper on "Sanskrit poetry and Sanskrit poetics"⁹ that highly inflected languages (like Sanskrit and, if you will, Latin and Greek) present different types of poetic possibilities than those presented by less highly inflected (or, as he calls them, analytic) languages such as English or Bengali.) On the most obvious level, that of syntax, Ingalls feels that the flexibility of word order in Sanskrit, like that, as we have seen, in Latin, dictated by the fact that the relationships of words to one another are defined by case endings, makes possible variations in the order of their presentation without varying the meaning of sentence. This has an obvious effect upon meter, there being more of a range of choice open to the poet. Thus, in Sanskrit, either the word order "Shakuntala with arm throbbing approached the king" or "The king with arm throbbing approached Shakuntala" is possible, though English syntax changes the meaning. Or, on a more mundane level, "The man bit the dog" is not the same as "The dog bit the man". As flexibility of order adds greatly to the possible variety of meter, so it reduces considerably a poetically desirable ambiguity and subtlety. (Influenced in highly inflected languages in which word order is flexible have to be made through distinctions in meaning of almost synonymous words. It will be clear that when one is attempting to translate Sanskrit poetry into a language like English, one of the basic problems will be to state economically and without strings of modifiers and footnotes, exactly this distinction.

Bengali, on the other hand, while slightly more highly inflected than

English, gains subtlety in other than lexical ways. Intonation is one. Word order is another; for, as I have suggested, if word order is rigidly defined, departure from the norm may yield either desirable ambiguity or power. Blake's poem "The Sick Rose" is a case in point:

O Rose, thou art sick!
 The invisible worm
 That flies in the night,
 In the howling storm,

 Has found out thy bed
 Of crimson joy,
 And his dark secret love
 Does thy life destroy.

Apart from the necessity of understanding the symbolism of the rose and worm, to appreciate the power of the poem it is necessary to understand the normal word order of English. The subject, the worm, is described by a series of modifying clauses, which build up the tension until the very final word of the poem, "destroy", a word order very awkward for normal speech, but lending the poem great strength.

So here we have an argument the other way, that linguistically Bengali, despite its regionalism, should be essentially more translatable into English than is Sanskrit, in that the same types of poetic effects are possible due to structural similarities of the two languages. For the sake of variety, let's look briefly at a Bengali translation of an English poem, taking for the fun of it e e cummings' "Etcetera", and a Bengali translation by Bishnu De. The cummings poem reads, in part:

My sweet old etcetera
 aunt lucy during the recent
 war could and what
 is more did tell you just
 what everybody was fighting
 for,

A literal version of De's translation:¹⁰

my sweet old (f.) etc.
 aunt lucy of recent times

though he may not know the language so well, and though his sympathies lie with Pope. But before we are aware of the importance of the idea of a work of literature. We respond to Shakespeare in his ideas, we judge and distinguish Donne, we respond on their language. But our response to this is a changing thing. Shakespeare seems so unique that he stands outside the Elizabethan context—he seems far more alien to the Elizabethans. But how can we distinguish the commonplace and cliché for the Elizabethans from the commonplace and cliché for us? We dislike the language of their expression appears to us insipid, yet it appears to their contemporaries, and presumably the expression of any poets will appear insipid to the next generation. To become aware of the fluid nature of our response to Shakespeare, the familiarity which breeds contempt, the search for a new content to which the latest developments assume awareness of literary tradition—then the most disconcerting possibilities of the most curious is this: that we may become familiar with Shakespeare without becoming over-familiar with its clichés! The poets to which the paled native taste finds trite, still retain their freshness for the foreigner. This would help to account for Baudelaire's criticism of the poverty of Poe's language. And again, in so far as Baudelaire's responses are conditioned by his own literary tradition—Racine after Shakespeare, or to Shakespeare after Racine—his response cannot be the same as a native response. And for some of our students, the fact that they are not merely reading in translation, but in a language other than their mother tongue, will make them perhaps less sensitive to the inadequacies of particular translations!

The notion that there is one ideal response to a work of art, in dictating all the others (with the corollary that this response must take place through the original) is surely misleading. Each age, each culture, each individual has a different response. This is especially evident in the case of a writer like Shakespeare who has spread all over the world. The Hamlets of Dr. Johnson, of Charles Lamb, of Coleridge, of Coleridge, of Bradley, of Salvador de Madariaga are all continually different. The Shakespeare of Garrick was as different from the real Shakespeare as was the Shakespeare of *Sturm und Drang*,

and different again must be the Shakespeare of a good Soviet Marxist who believes in the perfectibility of man, or of a pious Hindu who accepts the law of *karma*. Think how remote Werther's Homer is from the Homer of the Greeks, and we all know how Jewett turned Socrates into a member of High Table. Are we to deny the validity of all these literary experiences? If we push our pursuit of the 'genuine' response too far, we shall have to become Elizabethans to appreciate Shakespeare, and ancient Greeks to understand Attic tragedy.

Those who assert that it is 'impossible' to teach literature in translation rarely pursue the logic of their thought to this absolute conclusion. They postulate the qualitative change from translation to original, but fail to take into account the degree of familiarity. The fact that Pope may be taught to Indian post-graduate students of English literature in no way ensures that they will thrill to his immaculate choice of words. Unless they have a highly developed sense of nuance, rhythm, and frequency value, they will only grasp the banality of his thought—and might just as well be reading him in translation. Nor would a group of students in England or America whose mother tongue was English but background unliterary, fare any better. And does not Pope reveal new beauties at each new reading—and do not other poets pall? Might it not be argued that a student must become steeped in the language of a period in order to truly appreciate a poet? Then why not argue that the student is only passing through a stage in this development: it is not the level which is so important, but the response—not 'any' response, but not necessarily the 'perfectly right' one either. What Etienne says of the ideal teacher in his recent book *Comparaison n'est pas Raison* is equally valid for the student: 'I want him to be a *lover* (*amateur*) of poems, theatre, or novels....' The first aim of a course of literature must be to rouse this enthusiasm, this *love*—which will of itself provoke the student to learn the languages of the authors he prefers. Of course *love* should not be made incompatible with discipline! (an excuse for the lazy), and obviously all graduate research must be through the original languages.

All this is in no way intended to belittle the advantages of reading in the original; my aim is to point out that the disadvantage is relatively not so crucial as is often assumed. In the case of Comparative Literature, this disadvantage is the price paid for the compensatory aims of variety, world scope, and the increased understanding which comparison between cultures makes possible. At this point I may be

to be up over a major problem—the difficulty of teaching through translation. Few will deny that millions have responded to Russian novelists without knowing a word of Russian. The epic poets—Homer, Virgil, Dante—still communicate a great deal in translation (however different, as we have seen, it may be from the original impact). But in the case of poetry—and especially poetry where expression and meaning fuse, translations are almost inadequate. No other language could reproduce the effect of *Le Cimetière Marin* except as a completely different one (Rilke):

Ich Sorge mich, und in mir steht das Haus.
 Ich hüte mich, und in mir ist die Hut.
 Geliebter, der ich wurde: and mir ruht
 der schönen Schöpfung Bild und weint sich aus.

There is no argument for not teaching Valéry or Rilke at all. We can describe their lives, their relation to their age, their position in literary history, their poetic ideals. And for our translations, we can avoid those poets or poems that are completely intractable: Rilke is too difficult, but Hölderlin comes across very well. If sonnets were made only with words, as Mallarmé told Degas, then poetry would indeed be untranslatable—or translatable only into new poems—and to that extent it may well be that Mallarmé *is* untranslatable. But in spite of Mallarmé, words do refer out beyond themselves, and translations, however inadequate, do give a rough sort of equivalent to serve as a *starting point*. Why else should Roger Fry have attempted Mallarmé? After all, a good translation of a poem is closer to the original in spirit and meaning than it is to anything else.

Having accepted the necessity and possibility of teaching through translations, we may now select a representative example, and see how much the students actually lose. Etiemble goes so far as to advocate the comparative study of translations as a valid branch of our discipline: 'Whether one studies the different English translations of a single poem by Saint-John Perse or French translations of a single poem by Tóth Árpád, or by Vörösmarty, or whether one examines the translations of a single poem in three, four, five, or ten languages which have different structures and phonetics, in either case one is engaged in an exercise of real comparative literature.' In

the second part of this essay, I should like to examine four currently available translations of Goethe's *Faust*, and estimate their limitations.

II—A COMPARISON OF *Faust* TRANSLATIONS

The versions of *Faust* most readily available in Calcutta, and used by our students, are as follows: (1) the Theodore Martin translation of 1865-6 (*Everyman* edition, slightly revised by W. H. Bruford; (2) the Bayard Taylor translation of 1870 (*Modern Library* and *World's Classics*); (3) the Philip Wayne translation published by *Penguin Books* in 1949; (4) 'A new American version based on the translation of C. F. MacIntyre' published by *New Directions* in 1949 (Part I only). The first three are in rhyming verse, more or less following the metres of the original; the last is in a free style close to prose.

There is nothing quite like Goethe in English literature. Only those who read German can understand why he is considered the greatest lyric poet of Germany. The first problem is to find an equivalent style. Goethe's style in *Faust* varies according to mood, ranging from Hans Sachsian doggerel to classical Alexandrines, from Zachariae and Wieland to Klopstock and *Sturm und Drang*, but the dominant mood is closer to the Enlightenment than Romanticism. He may remind us of Marlowe, or Wordsworth, or Byron, but on the whole he is closer to Dryden—certainly an Augustan style is required for Mephistopheles. In fact with his peculiar combination (or alternation) of Romantic passion and Augustan detachment, it is very difficult to find an English equivalent. Most translators put *Faust* into a kind of stock literary language while affecting a colloquial air. In so far as this language is Tennysonian, it is most unfortunate. Take the short speech of Mephistopheles on Faust's life as a scholar:

Was ist das für ein Marterort?
Was heisst das für ein Leben führen,
Sich und die Jungens ennuyieren?
Lass du das dem Herrn Nachbar Wanst!
Was willst du dich das Stroh zu dreschen plagen?
Das Beste, was du wissen kannst,
Darfst du den Buben doch nicht sagen.

The difficulty is to reproduce in English the naturalness of this within the framework of metre and rhyme—and the task is made more difficult by a certain literary quality, (Herrn Nachbar Wanst) which

the detachment) without prejudicing the naturalness of von Mephistopheles' habit of using foreign words, and the fact. In Martin and Taylor this naturalness is quite lost. Forced rhymes, distorted word-order, and a general lack of expression:

Ugh! what a place of torture dire!
Ugh! you this life—yourself to tire,
And some few youngsters, each a dunce?
Leave that to neighbour Paunch to do.
Why plague yourself with threshing straw?
What's best of all that's known to you,
You dare not tell these striplings raw.
(Martin)

What place of martyrdom is here!
Ugh! I ask, is't even prudence,
To bore thyself and bore the students?
Let Neighbour Paunch to that attend!
Why plague thyself with threshing straw forever?
The best thou learnest, in the end
Thou dar'st not tell the youngsters—never!
(Taylor)

Words add words and ideas: there is no 'dunce' and no 'prudence' in the German, while 'dire', 'forever', 'to do', 'in the end', 'never' are purely superfluous. Martin has mistranslated 'ennuyieren', while 'some few youngsters' and 'these striplings raw' weaken the simplicity of the original, 'den Buben'. Unhandicapped by rhyme, the tone and naturalness of the original might be rendered thus: 'What a torture lander this place is! What kind of a life d'you think you're leading boring yourself and boring the students! Leave that to your colleague Dr. Paunch! Why make yourself miserable threshing straw? After all, you can't even tell the boys the best things you know!' A German approaches this, but at some cost of accuracy:

Why hug this learned martyrdom?
We've more exciting plans to launch
Than leading students by the nose;
Leave that to neighbour Doctor Paunch!
Is threshing straw the penance you propose?
The richest items of your knowledge
You cannot tell to lads in college.

Wayne is really very clever—though not always so successful—at rephrasing to make the rhymes sound natural, but it is the rhyme on Paunch that dictates those exciting plans, and there is no suggestion of threshing straw as a *penance* in the original. Nevertheless, the ideas arise acceptably from the context. MacIntyre is very natural (and also accurate)—but he sacrifices the rhyme and metre, and with them that attraction of skill and inevitability which makes Goethe such a delight to read:

This place is a torment.
What sort of a life is it where a man
bores both himself and his students?
Leave that to your neighbour, Doctor Paunch!
Why should you slave to thresh out that old straw?
The best you know you can't show the boys.

Nor can I resist a quibble: in a translation claiming to be 'the most faithful possible to the original', why change 'tell' into 'show'?

These brief extracts summarise to a certain extent the faults and qualities of the four translators. Both Martin and Taylor have dated. Their vocabulary has a period flavour which was artificial (Scott etc.) even when they were writing: 'aught' for 'anything', 'nought' for 'nothing', 'thou', 'thee', 'thine', 'ye' for 'you' and 'your' with the awkward verb-endings in -st, 'foe' for 'enemy', 'farewell' for 'good-bye', 'quaff', 'tarry', 'tis', and more obvious archaisms like 'hight' ('called'), 'lave' ('bathe'), 'prithee', 'forsooth', 'nay, but ...', 'I ween', 'full soon', 'woe's me', 'amain' etc. etc. Taylor also has tendency to use odd words and expressions like 'fere' (the witch to her animals), 'I blissed it' (Gretchen of her baby), or 'They scatter, devote and doom' (of the apparitions seen by Faust and Mephistopheles on their way to Gretchen's dungeon).

Both the nineteenth century translations poeticise their subject matter according to the fashion of their day, especially Martin. When in the soliloquy preceding his attempt at suicide Faust speaks of experiencing the 'life of gods' by creativity, Martin turns this by the cliché: 'in creating taste a bliss supreme'. When Faust complains that the Earth Spirit has thrust him back 'ins ungewisse Menschonlos' (the 'uncertain state of man'), this becomes: 'Upon the sad uncertainties forlorn/Of man's mere mortal state.' Later in the same passage his 'Lust nach Wahrheit' ('desire for truth') is rendered 'did after

of a 'quivering passion pine', and 'den leichten Tag' (the light which he brought becomes 'the radiance of the day'). The English is transformed. The famous remark 'Two souls, alas, live in me' comes out: 'Two souls, alas, within my bosom dwell'. Taylor is obviously led astray by this kind of diction, but with him too a general softening which pervades the whole, and he too can say: 'When Gretchen describes how she brought up her little brother comments: "You must have felt the purest happiness", the father portendises: "The purest bliss was surely then your dower" says Martin: "You must have felt most purely blest"'. Martin's translation is somewhat bowdlerised—all those dirty Walpurgis references are glossed over: 'Kopf und Hinten' becomes 'head and heart'! In the Imperial Masquerade where the mother urges her daughter 'get thee from thy lap' (Taylor), if she still wants to capture a husband, Martin makes this 'your charms without stint display'. All these translations creak with the awkwardness of following the original and rhythm—and yet trying to sound natural! Goethe's colloquial ease and pointed urbanity is turned into something stilted, artificial. The loss is partly in the details, partly cumulative. There is an almost necessary of adding adjectives for the sake of rhyme, or more words to fill up the metre—thus a comrade becomes a 'comrade boon' (rhyme with 'soon'), faith becomes a 'faith robust' (rhyme with 'must'), while superfluous exclamations like 'tis indeed'! or hey! fill out a line. Worst of all is Martin's 'hey'! when Mephistopheles tells Faust that Gretchen 'Thinks of the trinkets night and day, And more of him that brought them—hey'! Goethe's word is always natural, and Wayne generally manages to retain this, but Martin and Taylor do not shrink from the clumsiest inversions: 'Courage I feel into the world to roam' (Martin); 'The sword thy heart in With anguished smarting ...' (Taylor). The awkwardness is particularly apparent in the scenes with versified popular speech: Outside the City Gate; Auerbach's Cellar; At the Well. We get this kind of artificial jollity:

Will nobody drink? Is there never a joke
Among you, or a bit of fun to poke?
At other times you can blaze away;
But, egad, you're all like wet straw today.

(Martin)

Wayne gets the modern idiom, but abandons the quatrain:

What, nobody for a drink?
Dull as a ditch, this place is.
Some of you seem to think
There's virtue in pulling long faces.
Call yourselves lit-up, gay?
The pack of you's as bright as mouldy hay.

A brave attempt, but finally it doesn't ring true; a few lines later we are in the world of comic opera:

Sing, swill, my lads, and shout!
Hey, Holla, Ho!

A certain conscious artificiality is necessary here, and the rhymes (which are hardly noticeable above) should be distinct to enforce it: the problem is how to combine a convincing slang with this conscious artificiality. The speech of Valentine in front of Gretchen's door is also consciously operatic, but not so racy—it reads like a kind of ballad.

This naturalness combined with conscious artifice is what makes *Faust* so difficult to translate: it is as fatal to be too colloquial as to be too poetic. Goethe's verse is end-stopped almost throughout, yet most translations stray across the lines. This is one reason why Goethe's lines are so memorable, and his translators' not: they have that eighteenth century suggestion of finality. Time and again the neat pointedness of Goethe is lost—especially in those sly couplets of Mephistopheles. Take for instance Mephistopheles' comment after Faust has been knocked unconscious after trying to rescue Helena from Paris:

Da habt ihrs nun! mit Narren sich beladen,
Das kommt zuletzt dem Teufel selbst zu Schaden.

No version quite gets the neatness of this; the devil's witty paradox becomes forced and clumsy:

You've caught it now! With fools his lot to cast,
To trouble brings the devil's self at last!

(Martin)

You have it now! One's self with fools to hamper,
At last even on the devil puts a damper.

(Taylor)

Well, there it is! With fools best have no truck,
The may the devil himself be thunderstruck.

(Wayne)

Of all this is from the colloquial yet elegant simplicity of the original: 'So there you are, you see! taking up with fools and bringing the devil himself to grief')! This combination of plainness and naturalness with an unaffected elegance, far from confined to Mephistopheles (with whom it has an Augustan quality) characterises much of the entire play. It is used to quite different effect in the unforgettable words of Gretchen:

Doch—alles, was mich dazu trieb,
Gott! war so gut! ach was so lieb!

The slightest clumsiness will ruin this; Martin's is disastrous:

And yet—and yet—alas! the cause,
God knows, so good, so dear, it was!

Wayne is not much better with his pat logic and 'so to do':

Yet all that urged me so to do,
Dear God, it was so sweet and true.

All the heart-breaking love and longing have disappeared. Taylor comes nearest:

Yet—all that drove my heart thereto,
God! was so good, so dear, so true!

Faust is not only a drama of ideas, but also a great poem—predominantly lyrical. Especially in the Second Part whole digressions and hundreds of lines seem to be introduced solely for Goethe to exercise his lyrical facility—a sheer display of virtuosity. From the early speech of Faust when he walks out with Wagner in the springtime ('Freed from ice are stream and river . . .') to the last song of Lynceus the Watchkeeper, the work is shot through with delight in nature and praise of 'die ewige Zier' (ever renewed beauty of the earth). All

those songs of Ariel and Garden Girls, and Nymphs and Sirens, Lynceus in ecstasy before Helena, Faust's hymn to Arcadia, or the dithyrambics of Helena's attendants before they finally merge with nature—all comprise a purely lyrical outpouring—singing for the sake of singing—which only another great poet could reproduce. Translations may retain the meaning, but lose the delight and ease; they tend to bore the reader. This could only be illustrated by quotation at great length. The tighter the verses, the more difficult the task. This makes the Euphorion episode a particular challenge, e.g.

Magst nicht in Berg und Wald
Friedlich verweilen?
Suchen wir alsobald
Reben in Zeilen,
Reben am Hügelrand,
Feigen und Apfelgold.
Ach in dem holden Land
Bleibe du hold!

Even without any knowledge of German a listener would thrill to the sound and rhythm of this, if it were read out. No translation could reproduce its purely poetic qualities—the alliteration and verbal music, the luscious consonants which roll in the mouth, the effect of the varying line-lengths, the repetition and choice of the very word 'hold'—here indeed is poetry made of words ('Reben in Zeilen . . . Feigen und Apfelgold'). Wayne's attempt is the worst of all, banal, inaccurate, cliché-ridden, dull:

Tarry, where wood and height
Peacefully shine.
Seek we for your delight
Fruit of the vine,
Grapes from the mountainside,
Figs, apple-gold;
Ah, in this land abide
With joy untold.

Martin and Taylor put it into the Victorian poetic idiom. Taylor is not much better than Wayne:

Bide thou by grove and hill,
Peacefully, rather!

Yet from the vineyard will
 Grapes for thee gather,
 Grapes from the ridges tanned,
 Lips and the apple's gold:
 Alas, yet the lovely land,
 I long to hold!

But at least it does achieve a certain lyrical pace, and his 'darling' works
 II

O rock and forest wold
 Cannot allure thee,
 Apples with cheeks of gold
 We shall ensure thee,
 Lips, and, in alleys spanned,
 Vines on the mountain side.
 Oh, in this darling land,
 Darling, abide!

But they have failed to see that sound is more important than meaning
 in the original, and although retaining the metres, none could repro-
 duce the conciseness.

All three versions attempt to keep the original metres throughout,
 but cannot always keep it up, especially when the German is quick
 and short. The general effect is to slow Goethe down, to lame his
 diction. Neither Martin nor Taylor can manage Mephistopheles'
 jargon of his spirits in their own measures:

Dies sind die Kleinen
 Von den Meinen.
 Höre wie zu Lust und Taten
 Altklug sie raten!
 In die Welt weit,
 Aus der Einsamkeit....

Martin makes the lines regular, and longer, sacrificing the dainty,
 tentative, sprite-like quality:

These my tiny spirits be.
 Hark, with what sagacity
 They advise thee to pursue
 Action, pleasure ever new!
 Out into the world so fair
 They would lure and lead thee hence....

Wayne also fails to capture the enchantment, trims the line lengths and mixes up the rhymes:

These all belong to me.
My pretty infantry.
Hear them commending,
Cunning and coy,
Quests never ending,
Action and joy,
Go from your solitude
Coursing the world, renewed....

As usual he shows scant respect for accuracy: there is no 'quests never ending' in the original, nor any 'pretty infantry', while 'cunning and coy' is not very happy for 'altklug' (used of a child wise beyond its years). Taylor comes nearest to the spirit and impulse of the original, though he too opens a little ponderously:

These are the small dependants
Who give me attendance.
Hear them, to deeds and passion
Counsel in shrewd old-fashion!
Into the world of strife,
Out of this lonely life....

MacIntyre, too, surprisingly elaborates and changes the meaning slightly (the meaning literally is: 'These are the little ones from my followers'):

These little fellows
Belong to my faction.
Hear how they shrewdly
advise you to act
and enjoy yourself.
Try the wide world;
abandon this solitude....

The shift from what appears to be metre to quite undistinguished prose is disconcerting.

German is notoriously richer in rhymes than English—to the despair of translators of Heine and Rilke as well as Goethe. On the whole the richly rhymed choruses come out better in Martin and Taylor than in the modern versions. Taylor realizes that in an oratorio

is more important than the words ; he follows the German
text.

Christ is arisen,
Out of corruption's womb:
But ye the prison,
Break from your gloom!
Pleading and pleading Him,
Lovingly needing Him,
Brotherly feeding Him,
Preaching and speeding Him.
Obeying, succeeding Him,
Thus is the Master near, —
Thus is He here.

Anyone who reads this completely; impossible to imagine his version
coming to the gothic vaults:

Christ is arisen
From foulness of death's decree.
Lo, from your prison,
Love sets you free.
Prize him and praise:
In witness always,
At bread when you raise
Your brotherly lays.
Who works and who prays,
As love fills his days,
May know without fear
His master is near.

This paraphrase is a travesty of the original with its triumphant
conclusion — the words themselves sing:

... Brüderlich speisenden,
Predigend reisenden,
Wonne verheissenden
Euch ist der Meister nah,
Euch ist er da!

A far greater challenge is presented by the closing Chorus Mysticus,
which is virtually impossible to translate—the very uncertainty of the
exact meaning of *Gleichnis* and *Ereignis* adds to the mystery of this
famous ending, and who could translate *das Ewig-Weibliche* into an

acceptable English concept? Martin translates *Ereignis* ('event') as 'fullness', introduces the idea of 'heavenly love', and generally softens the epigrammatic terseness of the original:

All in earth's fleeting state
As symbol showeth;
Here the inadequate
To fullness groweth;
Here is wrought the ineffable,
Through heavenly love;
The Ever-Womanly
Draws us above.

Taylor has his symbols 'sent', and turns the Eternal-Womanly into a soul which 'leads' not 'draws' us; otherwise his version is the closest:

All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to event:
The Indescribable,
Here it is done:
The Woman-soul leadeth us
Upward and on.

Unlike the clumsy openings of the other two, Wayne makes a good beginning, but the rest is disappointing. Like Martin he introduces 'fulfilment' and 'love', like Taylor he changes 'draws' into 'leads', while his 'Wins life through love' (to translate 'Here it is done'—and we remember the emphasis on *doing* throughout the play) is a more inexcusable interpolation than anything in the other two:

All things corruptible
Are but a parable;
Earth's insufficiency
Here finds fulfilment;
Here the ineffable
Wins life through love;
Eternal Womanhood
Leads us above.

None of the versions has kept the strict measures of the German, nor even attempted to follow the rhyme scheme: a b a b a c a c, with rhymes on 1, 2 and 3 syllables:

1. ...
 2. ...
 3. ...
 4. ...
 5. ...
 6. ...
 7. ...
 8. ...
 9. ...
 10. ...

precise and economical; in translation there is an
 of ... and impression. Consider the case where Mephis-
 ... from a peevish to a wandering scholar, and Faust
 ... "What is your name?" Mephistopheles replies that this seems
 ... from one 'who so despises the Word' (he has just
 ... on Faust translating St. John), and continues:

Der weit entfernt von allem Schein
 In der Wesen Tiefe trachtet.

...

Der auch, ihr Herrn, kann man das Wesen
 Gewöhnlich aus dem Namen lesen....

one of the four translators keeps the same word for each 'Wesen'; it
 is ... rendered 'being', 'nature', 'quintessence', 'life', 'identity'—
 in all cases the neat repartee is lost. The brief expression 'remote
 from all appearances' is also weakened: 'scorning all mere semblances'
 (Martin), 'becoming all external gleams' (Taylor), 'far removed from
 ... and dreams' (Wayne), 'sceptical of appearances' (Mac-
 ...). There is no reason why 'nature' should not translate 'Wesen'
 in both cases, keeping the shift from the general to the individual.
 It is obviously important, for any detailed analysis, that such words
 as *Licht*, *Nacht*, *streben*, *Sorge*, *Geist*, *Seele*, *Gefühl*, *Tat*, *Schein*,
Wesen, *Augenblick*, etc. should be consistently translated by the same
 equivalent. But Martin, for instance, translates *Gefühl* by 'thrill',
 'ecstasy', 'feeling' indiscriminately. Both Martin and Taylor trans-
 late Plutus' 'Bist Geist von meinem Geiste' (to the Boy Poetry; *Geist*
 is the same word as for the Earth-Spirit, not the part that Mephisto-
 philes is trying to catch) as 'soul of my soul'. Martin changes the
 'Erdbeuer Geist' into a 'Majestic Spirit'; for Wayne it is a 'Mighty

Spirit'—yet Goethe wrote 'Sublime', and considering the importance of the concept 'sublime' it is hard to justify the change, especially as it implies a slight change of attitude too.

The loosening often takes the form of elaboration (dictated by rhyme, metre, etc.). This might be successful in another poet of genius, but in these versions it is generally wooden and mechanical:

now memories sweet,
Fraught with the feelings of my childhood's prime
From the last step decisive stay my feet.

(Martin)

This is Faust saved by Easter bells and choir. The German actually reads:

Memory holds me now with childlike feeling
Back from the last, decisive step.

The tautological 'prime' is introduced to rhyme with an earlier line ending, while 'sweet' and 'feet' are both added for the sake of rhyme—'stay my feet' (when actually his hand was holding the goblet of poison) is particularly unhappy. Elsewhere the student is deprived of accuracy as well as epigrammatic terseness, as in the key definition of poetry in the Imperial Masquerade:

Bin die Verschwendung, bin die Poesie;
Bin der Poet, der sich vollendet,
Wenn er sein eigenst Gut verschwendet. ...

Martin changes 'fulfils himself' into 'works for noblest ends', and weakens 'eigenst Gut' (most precious in the sense of most personal possession) to 'best wealth':

I am Profusion, Poesy my name!
The poet I, who works to noblest ends,
When his best wealth he most profusely spends....

Taylor's expression 'whose perfect crown is sent' is even less acceptable (and odder!) than Martin's working to noblest ends, and the plural 'goods' is less appropriate than Martin's 'wealth'; the effect is contrived:

The poet's crown of Poesy
 Whose perfect crown is sent
 Whose perfect crown hath freely spent....

all is heard and grating, with a literary kind of
 sense (When prodigal...); and Profusion is no longer
 for the soul of Poesy

The poet's crown of Poesy;
 The poet's fulfilled and one content
 When prodigal, his special wealth is spent....

The worst instances of elaboration clouding Goethe's epigram-
 matic is Martin's rendering of the famous lines:

Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunklen Drange
 Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewusst.

A good man, in the darkness and dismay:

A good man, in the darkness and dismay
 Of powers that fail, and purposes o'erthrown,
 May still be conscious of the proper way.

There is no question of dismay, or failing powers, or purposes o'er-
 thrown in the German—nor is Martin justified in reading defeat into
 the lines, which suggest rather the unchained will. And why change
 such a positive is 'certain of the right way' into the tentative 'may be'?
 Taylor is closer:

A good man, through obscurest aspiration,
 Has still an instinct of the one true way.

But 'aspiration' (positively charged) does not translate the neutral
 'urge' (Drang), and Martin's 'conscious' is more correct than Taylor's
 'instinct' (often consciousness and instinct are opposed). Wayne also
 introduces concepts with false associations:

A good man in his dark, bewildered course
 Will not forget the way of righteousness.

Righteousness? Surely not the word for Goethe's spiritual ideal! With

its Old Testament moral overtones, this is a blunder of the first order. 'Bewildered' is no more than an explanation of 'dark', while the key word *Drang* (cf. *Sturm und Drang*) has been left out altogether. MacIntyre interprets 'Drang' as 'struggling', omitting the forward motion of the word (cf. *Drang nach Osten*), and although accurate enough, replaces a strong by a weak line and lacks punch:

A good man, struggling in his darkness,
will always be aware of the true course.

No version retains the alliteration: 'dark desires' would sound too sinisterly gothic; 'dark urges' or 'dark impulses' would be too physical and particular. Either accuracy or poetic qualities must be dropped.

Another example of Martin's effusiveness is where he expands three of Goethe's lines ('Doch ihr, die echten Göttersöhne, / Erfreut euch der lebendig reichen Schöne! / Das Werdende, das ewig wirkt und lebt ...') into five lines of his own:

But ye, true sons of heaven, rejoice to share
The wealth exuberant of all that's fair,
Which lives and has its being everywhere!
And the creative essence which surrounds,
And lives in all, and worketh evermore...

But another problem is involved here: the problem of translating peculiarly German syntax and word-formation, particularly verbs and adjectives turned into abstract nouns (*das Schöne*, *das Werdende*—'the beautiful', 'that which is becoming': such expressions do not succeed in English). Taylor rephrases, but keeps within three lines:

But ye, God's sons in love and duty,
Enjoy the rich, the ever-living Beauty!
Creative Power, that works eternal schemes....

Far from expanding, he brings in 'love' and 'duty' extra! Wayne too prefers English abstract words which are rough equivalents, but 'growth' is not so dynamic as *das Werdende*, while by replacing Goethe's adjective 'rich' by another abstraction 'full wealth' and his forceful verbs *lebt und wirkt* by vague rhetoric, he still further weakens the effect:

What, ye true sons of heaven, shall delight
 In the full wealth of living beauty's sight.
 Eternal Growth, fulfilment, vital, sure....

A problem crop up everywhere, as when Faust asks the
 Doctor and Mephistopheles replies:

Kein Weg! Ins Unbetretene,
 Nicht in Betretende; ein Weg ans Unerbetene,
 Nicht in Erbetende

But this is not so much that it makes sense as that it
 is senseless and dreadful. Martin as usual expands, and by
 the rhetoric of poetry (moral prayers, etc.) misses the
 point.

Road there is none
 That has been, and must untrodden still be;
 There is no road to what was never won
 By mortal prayer or vow, nor ever will be

This is too plausible. Taylor sticks close to the original, but
 captures the hocus pocus element of similar sounding words:

No way! — To the Unreachable,
 Never to be trodden! A way to the Unbeseechable,
 Never to be besought!

MacIntyre lurches, then repeats the inadequacy of Taylor:

There is none. Way to the Unreachable,
 Never for treading, to those Unbeseechable,
 Never besought!

What possessed him to change the echoing rejoinder: 'No way!' for
 the weak, informative 'There is none' (without even an exclamation
 mark to be incomprehensible; it even involves him in a sacrifice of
 sense ('Way' for 'A way') and metre (the line should follow on
 from the last).

All three verse translations contain a fair number of minor inac-
 curacies and mistranslations, and even MacIntyre cannot be wholly
 relied on. But such slips and inaccuracies are mostly insignificant.

Taylor makes the poodle 'bellow', and has Gretchen address the Mater Dolorosa as 'maiden'. After writing in the student's book the old tag 'You will be as God, knowing good and evil', Mephistopheles comments on his departure that his likeness to God will soon make him miserable ('bange'), which Taylor renders: 'With all thy likeness to God, thou't yet be a sorry example'. In the Witch's Kitchen Faust finds the animals 'abgeschmackt' ('in bad taste') echoing the Enlightened reader's attitude to all this mediaeval nonsense: Martin ('loathsome') and Wayne ('revolting') miss the nuance; Taylor and MacIntyre come closer with 'absurd'. This is no place to catalogue all such minor errors. There is bound to be loss of precision, loss of subtlety. When Faust dies, Mephistopheles echoes the words of Christ on the Cross (Luther: 'Es ist vollbracht'; Authorized Version: 'It is finished'); Wayne misses this: 'All is fulfilled' (Martin and Taylor both have 'finished'). The student is unlikely to worry much about such details; he is more likely to complain about the obscurity which verse translators are prone to add to their originals. Wayne makes a particularly obscure transition from stanza 3 to 4 of the Dirge for Euphorion-Byron. Literally the German has: 'You wanted to achieve glorious things, but you did not succeed. Who does succeed? ...' In Wayne this becomes: 'Glorious things all your desiring/Still, alas, denied by fate./Whose the gain then? ...' This seems to imply that somebody else has the advantage; the line is simply puzzling without reference to the German.

Goethe does not offer the kinds of difficulty represented by the Rilke passage quoted earlier, but there is a special rightness about his language which is most difficult to recapture. The original is full of memorable speeches and formulae which lose their compulsion in translation. Words and phrases which in their unique expressiveness have become part of the familiar heritage of German literary speech emerge rhetorical and forced in English. The meaning is retained but the conviction lost. Of many such passages—indeed these remarks might be extended to the entire play—two examples may suffice. First, the passage where Faust denies the traditional purpose of the pact ('You hear, don't you, it's not of joy we're talking'):

Dem Taumel weih ich mich, dem schmerzlichsten Genuss,
Verliebttem Hass, erquickendem Verdruss.
Mein Busen, der vom Wissensdrang geheilt ist,
Soll keinen Schmerzen künftig sich verschliessen,

... das Vergnügen Menschheit zugeteilt ist,
und das Vergnügen nicht selbst genießen...

In the directness of this, Martin and Taylor give us some superbly expressive: 'bliss that throbs till it / is dead as human nature's dole', 'the wildering whirl', 'the defeat for knowledge sated'. For each brief oxy-moron there is a whole line, e.g. 'The defeat that inspirits / the triumph' (Taylor: 'exhilarant disdain'). The urgent directness of the German (Faust is at least self-deceived in his titanic scholarly posture in English. Above all the English is direct. The directness of 'shall in future exclude no sorrows' is not by artificial expressions like 'shall not, henceforth, / nor be wrested', or 'henceforth shall expand to all forms of being'. Wayne's 'modern' version eschew such literary

I take the way of turmoil's bitterest gain,
Of love sick hate, of quickening bought with pain.
My heart, from learning's tyranny set free,
Shall no more shun distress, but take its toll
Of all the hazards of humanity,
And nourish mortal sadness in my soul.

It is difficult to believe that the German achieves distinction by direct and concentrated natural speech—not popular, not casual, but direct and straightforward. It contains no poeticisms like 'turmoil's bitterest gain', nor clichés like 'the hazards of humanity', nor oddities like the heart taking its 'toll' of them. And where does that 'mortal sadness' come from? There is nothing like it in the entire speech in German. Faust has put all that weary disenchantment behind him! MacIntyre's version is equally undistinguished; his Faust speaks rather like an earnest, romantic twentieth century undergraduate on holiday in Paris:

Listen! It's not a question of joy.
I vow myself to excitement, intoxication,
the bitterest pleasures, amorous hatred,
and stirring remorse. My heart, now free
of the longing for learning, shall close itself
to no future pain. I mean to enjoy

in my innermost being all that is offered to mankind,
to seize the highest and the lowest,
to mix all kinds of good and evil,
etc. etc.

As a second example of a key formula losing memorable and clear expression, consider the comparison of human life to a rainbow at the beginning of Part II:

Der spiegelt ab das menschliche Bestreben.
Ihm sinne nach, und du begreifst genauer:
Am farbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben.

The German could not be more direct: the rainbow 'is an image (lit: mirror) of human striving. Reflect upon it, and you will understand better: we have our life in the refracted colours (lit: the colours which shine from it).' Both Martin and Wayne add superfluous poetic elaboration; they lift the passage out of conceptual clarity into misty cliché: 'human striving' becomes 'mortal coil and strife' (Martin), a 'mortal stage' appears from nowhere (Wayne); a 'mystery' (Wayne) and 'truth profound' (Martin) ensure that we appreciate the depths of Goethe's wisdom, which is 'darkly writ' (Martin)—Taylor, incidentally, says just the opposite: 'tis easy comprehending'. Martin drops the key word 'coloured' altogether, while Wayne prefers the poetic 'hues' and weakens the expressiveness by changing 'life' into 'life and being'.

A mirror this of mortal coil and strife,
Wherein is darkly writ this truth profound:
In its reflected glory we have life.

(Martin)

So strive the figures on our mortal stage.
This ponder well, the mystery closer seeing;
In mirrored hues we have our life and being.

(Wayne)

Taylor again is much more faithful, and his last line only a hair's breadth from the authority of the original:

Of human striving there's no symbol fuller:
Consider, and 'tis easy comprehending —
Life is not light, but the refracted colour.

Taylor: 'wondrous fair'). Later in the same speech Faust asserts he will never forget her red lips and bright cheek 'as long as the world lasts', which becomes in Wayne: 'will shine for me, outlasting time's eclipse'. Faust concludes: 'Das ist nun zum Entzücken gar!' ('Really exquisite!' or some such expression), which Wayne transforms: 'She seems enchanting youth personified'. Faust immediately turns to Mephistopheles and commands him: 'Listen, you've got to get that girl for me!' ('mir die Dirne schaffen'), and here the order of translator's naturalness is reversed, with Martin the nearest: 'Hark, you must get that girl for me!!' Taylor somewhat more formal: 'Hear, of that girl I'd have possession!'; and Wayne most clumsy of all: 'Listen! The girl, go win her, Sir, for me!' ('win' her?). It is hard to understand why Wayne lapses into archaisms and poeticisms ('full many a . . .', 'I would I knew . . .', 'Behold!') when his style elsewhere is so modern: 'Down with it, man, don't hesitate!' (Mephistopheles encouraging Faust to take the potion). And he too loosens and elaborates, e.g. the grateful fervour of the 'Forest and Cavern' scene ('Sublime Spirit, you gave me, gave me all/I asked for . . .') becomes: 'All things are come to me, O mighty Spirit!/All that I asked you gave me. . . .'

MacIntyre succeeds precisely where the others fail: he is lively, natural, and accurate. Compare:

What means't thou by that grin, thou hollow skull,
Save that thy brain, like mine, a cloudy mirror,
Sought once the shining day, and then, in twilight dull,
Thriving for Truth, went wretchedly to error.

(Taylor)

You hollow skull, what has your grin to say,
But that a mortal brain with trouble tossed,
Sought once like mine the sweetness of the day,
And strove for truth, and in the gloam was lost.

(Wayne)

What are you grinning at me hollow skull, except
that in your brain, confused like mine, once lived
something that sought bright day, desiring truth,
yet in the heavy dusk went miserably astray?

(MacIntyre)

MacIntyre here follows the German word for word. In the 'public'

... his popular speech is still a little self-conscious, but more convincing than the earlier versions. Unfortunately his modernisms are not only anachronistic ('Wow! look at that pair just going by! Come on brother, let's try to pick them up.') but do not go with the earlier stylised control and literary flavour of Goethe's verse and vocabulary (including expressions like 'die wackern Dirnen'). Wayne can pull this kind of thing off well—slightly archaic but lively:

Gad, how those buxom lasses stride along!
Come, brother, this is where we can't go wrong:
A pipe of shag, a glass of barley wine,
And then a well-dressed wench will suit me fine.

But the real trouble with MacIntyre's version is that it is too prosaic:

Good, Lord, and it won't take me long!
I'll not be worried about this wager!
But when I win, please let me take
my triumph fully. He must gorge on dust,
and love it, like my aunt, the celebrated snake.

This is too laconic and matter of fact: Mephistopheles has been changed from an eighteenth century libertine into a modern political agent. MacIntyre reduces the magic and skill of Goethe to something completely ordinary. Nevertheless his version comes through as the least affected and the least awkward, while of the verse translations I agree with E. M. Butler who wrote in 1949 that Taylor's still remains the best.*

III—Conclusion

My intention has been to examine the *limitations* of the four translations, and I have only pointed to their felicities in passing. I think it will now be clear that these limitations affect language and detail only (and I have stated the case at its harshest)—the broad framework of ideals and symbols remains unaffected, enough to enrich any student (more perhaps than reading a lesser author in a language he already knows). A teacher should point out the poetic qualities sacrificed in translation, and read out effective passages from the original. To offset discrepancies of detail, as well as varying overall impressions, the students may be required to read at least two ver-

sions: Taylor and MacIntyre (+Wayne's Part II); or Taylor and some other modern version. They should also of course be warned off bad translations, like that of Bertram Jessup which appeared amazingly enough in 1958. So too when teaching poetry, several versions of important poems (as Baudelaire's *Correspondances*) should be read together by the students. A teacher should also translate and explain literally from the original text of an important poem, while the students may compare with the versions before them. Even when the students do not take elementary language courses, some indication of peculiar structure and syntax may be given in connection with problems of interpretation as they arise—e.g. the formation of German abstract nouns from verbs and adjectives. Key words and phrases may also be given, as *das Dämonische*, *das Bürgerliche*, *Sitte*, *Bildung*, etc. in connection with Goethe, *donna angelicata*, *cor gentil* in connection with Dante, and so forth. In these circumstances a course of Comparative Literature, even through translations, should be as rewarding at the student level as any other course: the harvest comes later.

* The new translation of Walter Kaufmann has not yet reached India, so I have not been able to take it into account. Nor could I lay my hands on a copy of MacNiece's Part II.

ONE OR TWO ASPECTS OF THE 'SUBJECTIVE TRADITION' IN
THE PLAYS OF W. B. YEATS AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

YEATS loved conflicts of any kind, and I would like to show that most of the conflicts he portrayed in his plays are conflicts between what he termed as 'subjective' and 'objective' conditions, and also between the inner conflicts of the subjective tradition itself. In his rather esoteric book, *A Vision*, Yeats has used the words 'subjective' and 'objective' in a very special sense. Ignoring the geometrical denotation of the term 'cone' for the moment, we can concentrate on the general meaning of the following statement:

"By the antithetical cone, which is left unshaded in my diagram, we express more and more, as it broadens our inner world of desire and imagination, whereas by the primary, the shaded cone, we express more and more as it broadens that objectivity of mind which, in the words of Murray's Dictionary, lays 'stress upon that which is external to the mind' or treats 'of outward things and events rather than of inward thought'. The antithetical tincture is emotional and aesthetic whereas the primary tincture is reasonable." ...¹

To explain Yeats' doctrines, Morton Irving Seiden remarks, "By subjectivity he appears to mean the ego, the exaltation of individual consciousness, and thought that looks inward."² And Mr. F. A. C. Wilson goes one relevant step further, and comments on these two divisions in relation to religion: "... the objective thinker who will tend towards Christianity, and the subjective who will tend towards heterodoxy and the religions of the East."³ He has quoted Young to support his view: "The Western attitude, with its emphasis on the object, tends to fix the ideal Christ in its outward aspect and thus to rob it of its mysterious relation to the inner man.... The Eastern

attitude (more particularly the Indian) is the other way about: everything, highest and lowest, is in the transcendental subject. Accordingly, the significance of the Atman, the Self, is heightened by beyond all beyonds. But with the Western man the value of the self falls to zero: hence the universal depreciation of the soul in the West."⁴

Taking a hint from what Yeats himself has said in his *Vision*, and these remarks by two conscientious critics, we can now state that by 'objective' Yeats implies a condition which does not presuppose a human being to be complete or self-sufficient, but allows room for the Christian procedure of purification through self-denial, and by 'subjective,' a condition that attributes potential perfection to human beings and allows them, at a certain stage, to merge with the Godhead—a thought which has found its echo in Yeats' own wordings elsewhere:

"The creative energy of men depends upon their believing that they have, within themselves, something immortal and imperishable, and that all else is an image in a looking glass. So long as that belief is not a formal thing, a man will create out of a joyful energy."⁵

Mr. Wilson comments conclusively in the chapter of his *W. B. Yeats and Tradition*: "In the Christian world, the orthodox mystic would be objective; in the India of the Upanishads, subjectivity would have been the norm."⁶

Another interesting quality of this subjective condition is the quality of unfettered 'joy,' Yeats' 'joyful energy,' which is more an expression of supreme freedom rather than frivolous jollity. Yeats, despite his Christian background, leaned more on the subjective tradition, and I quote Mr. Wilson again, "Yeats' response to visionary experience was joyous; it convinced him that the human mind was 'blessed'."⁷ We mentioned the inner conflict in the subjective tradition itself, on which Peter Ure has justly commented: "Yeats' doctrine of the Mask, the notion that each man can find his hidden opposite, his anti- (or antithetical) self, is his best-known myth."⁸

From the point of view of dramaturgy, this theory is of special interest. First, it necessitates the creation of 'mask,' and by 'mask' I mean not only the literal mask which has certainly been used by Yeats in some of his plays, but also the idealized character of an individual which, when fixed upon him, is not subject to change

any more. My contention is that Tagore, almost unknowingly, followed the same dramatic principles, and Yeats' conception of 'subjectivity or objectivity' (and from now on, we are going to use these terms in a special Yeatsian sense, and not merely literally) is applicable to most of Tagore's symbolic plays.

Tagore, of course, was born into a subjective tradition, i.e. a tradition that believes in the potential perfection of a human being,⁹ a tradition that Yeats wanted to create in his own art. But we must consider at this stage that our main purpose is to study the conflict of two hypothetical traditions, named and used by Yeats as 'subjective' and 'objective,' the theological significance of which can be quite irrelevant, and we should also remember what Mr. Richard Ellmann has so aptly suggested: "Because he (Yeats) wished to use ideas without being submerged by them, Yeats kept throughout his life to the dramatic lyric and the drama, where the test of an idea is not its significance outside poem or play, but its relevance to the speaker's dramatic situation."¹⁰ It is propitious, on our part, to designate, once for all, these two different 'traditions' mostly as Yeats' own artistic conceptions, which he consciously demonstrated in his plays. If Tagore had articulated his theories of human conflict and his conception of dramaturgy he might have approximated Yeats' utterances, because, in actual dramatic practice though not in any elaborate theories, he brought in the same type of human conflict, the same clash of values, and also similar devices to accomplish his dramaturgy.

Historically speaking, both Yeats and Tagore reacted against the scientific naturalism of the nineteenth century in a similar fashion. Yeats ignored it completely, and welcomed the dawn of symbolist literature:

"The reaction against the Rationalism of the eighteenth century has mingled with a reaction against the materialism of the nineteenth century, and the symbolical movement which has come to perfection in Germany in Wagner, in England with the Pre-Raphaelites, in France in Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, and in Belgium in Maeterlink, and has stirred the imagination of Ibsen or D'Annunzio, is certainly the only movement that is saying new things. They must, as religious thought has always done, utter themselves through legends."¹¹

Yeats begins this essay by referring to Ernest Renan's *The Poetry of Celtic Races* and quotes him frequently to establish his dramatic

norm: "Compared with the classical imagination the Celtic imagination is indeed the *infinite* contrasted with the *finite*."¹²

Talking about his play *Prakritir Protishodh* (Nature's Revenge) in his *Reminiscences* (a play which, though not completely symbolic, has been designated by critics as an important indicator of Tagore's orientation towards dramatic symbolism), Tagore comments:

"The small essay I published called 'Discussion' contained in it an explanation of the central idea of *Nature's Revenge*. That the *finite* is not a confined object, but shows, in molecular forms, a depth of infinity, was the discussion. I do not know if it has any value as an idea and I do not know how *Nature's Revenge* would rank as poetry, but it is very clear now that if there is only one that has indirectly pervaded all my writings, it is this."¹³

which is exactly what Renan has ascribed to Celtic imagination.

About the 'subjective tradition,' we would like to show that both Yeats and Tagore wanted to dramatize, on one hand, "the infinite contrasted with the finite," and, on the other, to perpetrate the conflict of the subjective heroes and objective individuals and also the inner conflict of the subjective heroes themselves. Yeats himself has tried to touch on the core of these conflicts in his incomplete dialogue of 1915, *The Poet and the Actress*.¹⁴ "It is the struggle of the dream with the world"—but that it is not a mechanical opposition of two sets of values, a stock-in-trade of any two dramatists, has been maintained in the same dialogue:

"In every great play—in Shakespeare for instance—you will find a group of characters—Hamlet, Lear, let us say who express the dream, and another group who express the antagonist and to the antagonist Shakespeare gives a speech close to that of daily life. But it is not only the mere speech that must be heightened, there must be *whole phantasmagoria* through which the lifelong contest finds expression. There must be fable, mythology, that the dream and the reality may face one another in visible array."

I

"In none of his plays is there any real attempt to create character, but rather is there an attempt to express the emotions and elemental passions through the persons and figures which are but symbols....

The protagonists of his plays are neither full-bodied nor red-blooded, they do not emerge as personalities, but always there is conflict." These are Mr. Storm Jameson's remarks on Yeats' plays, and Mr. P. Guha-thakurta's comment on Tagore as a playwright is: "He can hold up the action with talk that makes action superfluous and the merely objective relation between one character and another seem unnecessary. His plots are nothing but little suggestive sketches meant to induce and express only an attitude of mind."¹⁵ Typical of many critics, the above-mentioned critics point to the oft-discussed fact of 'lack of characterization' in the plays of Yeats and Tagore, but with this fact are connected two or three rather interesting dramatic principles which we must take into account.

Both Yeats and Tagore dispensed with conventional 'character-portrayal' because, in their plays, they seemed to be preoccupied with ideas as such. Preoccupation with ideas does not necessarily breed bad drama, but it certainly creates a new kind of dramatic literature. The 'subjective' ideas, again, with which both Yeats and Tagore were preoccupied not only create similar dramatic situations but are also so transcendental in themselves that any attempt to find their objective correlatives is bound to be rather ill-outlined, and illusory. In contrast to the Elizabethan plays, the Greek tragedies are motivated by a central idea or a central vision which unites the various chords of the play into a harmonic whole. It is legitimate to conjecture, at this stage, that the 'lack of characterization' and domination of a 'central idea' may have something vital to do with the conception of 'tragedy' itself, and Yeats has made himself very clear about this point:¹⁶

"Comedy treats 'character' and originates in the peculiarities of human beings, their differentiation from one another. Tragedy must always be a drowning and breaking of the dykes that separate man from man, and...it is upon these dykes comedy keeps house....

Since comedy is based on the separateness of individuals, it establishes a community with its audience by appeal to the circumstances of their daily experience; the ideal response to a comic figure would be to place him in the world of usual being. ... Hence it is the essence of comedy to individuate by scrutiny of surface characteristics.

Yet, the peculiarities of dress, gesture, and speech do not ex-

haust the interest of a human being. There remains some hidden resource that comedy does not touch nor character include. . . .

Tragedy utilizes the interplay of circumstance and character mainly as a means to an end, for it is concerned with matters vaster than any individual person, time, or place."

It is clear, therefore, that Yeats preferred tragedy to comedy. But one more thing to be noticed is that tragedy, in Yeats' plays, occurs not only in situations and plots but also in the very conception of character-portrayal. The subjective individual, preferably a subjective hero, is not merely the symbol of a particular ethos, but also represents the Aristotelean 'Diaonia' or 'thought.' The quality of this 'thought' is such that it not only breaks what Yeats has referred to as dykes and transcends all characterization but also disturbs the usual order of the universe, causing, in most cases, at least a tragic situation. Some of Tagore's non-symbolic plays, especially the one called *Mālini*, have been compared with Greek tragedies, but even in plays where 'subjective' individuals and 'subjective' heroes prevail, we find the same symptoms of tragedy as we find in Yeats' plays, and we find them almost for similar reasons. The subjective hero becomes a thought or an idea incarnate, transgresses all limits of characterization, and even if he has some comic elements in him, he reaches such a pure height of passion that he eventually becomes too abstract or too powerful to remain a comic character. The fact is, any motivation short of a tragic one becomes secondary towards the end of these plays (the plays we are discussing), although they might begin with more than one initial motivation or direction.

Both Ranjan, and the King in Tagore's *Red Oleanders* meet with tragic ends. Further, not only does Ranjan remain in our mind, as he is supposed to, as a tragic hero, but the same thing can be said about the King also. The King is first introduced to us (or his voice rather, because he is invisible for the greater part of the drama) as a dry, frustrated, tyrannical, soulless ruler—an 'objective' hero in all his narrowness, and although his inner barrenness can be discerned even when he first opens his mouth, he certainly does not deserve the status of a tragic hero at that particular stage. But the more he is influenced by Nandini's charm, the radiating quality of her soul, and her urge to break his cobweb, the more vulnerable he becomes to a genuine change that begins to take place in his heart. The change is completed the moment he falls in love with her, and, by falling in

But with her, he leaps from one status to another, from the 'objective' to the 'subjective,' and, for the first time, assumes the dimension of a tragic hero: tragic, because he is now completely conscious of his discovered soul and its potentialities, and his passion for tyranny changes into a pure passion for love. The plane of reality changes for him, and the old plane gone, he seems to stumble towards a new direction. He falls victim to his own guards who refuse to see him in a new perspective, while he tries hard to abolish the old, orthodox administration of his own kingdom.

Ranjan was a 'subjective' hero, to start with, and we form our image of him by listening to the other characters, because he never appears on the stage. Nandini describes him as a romantic hero; the villagers, as a whimsical individual. Interestingly enough, this anonymity and lack of well-outlined characterization suit Ranjan very well, because he is, after all, an idea incarnate (the romantic idea of liberating everybody from the tyranny of a king), and it is quite appropriate that when, finally, he is brought on the stage he is seen already dead, killed by the King through a mistake. This fact is symbolic of the purity of intense passion, which Ranjan stands for, and the reason why we find weak characterization in Ranjan can be explained by Yeats' language.¹⁷

"Tragedy utilizes the interplay of circumstance and character mainly as a means to an end, for it is concerned with matters vaster than any individual person, time or place.

Those men and women ... who have made their death a ritual of passion; for what is passion but the straining of man's being against some obstacle that obstructs its unity; ...

In mainly tragic art one distinguishes devices to exclude or lessen character."

Lack of characterization is not a difficult thing to find in Yeats' plays. We need choose anyone from them to show how this 'absence of characterization' is closely connected with Yeats' conception of 'subjectivity' and how, as a dramatic principle, it inevitably attributes tragic qualities to a subjective hero.

In *At the Hawk's Well* the first sentence that Cuchulain utters when he appears on the stage is, "I have an ancient house beyond the sea" and this immediately establishes a non-realistic aura around his character. This non-realism slowly merges into idealism when,

contrary to the Old Man's apprehensions, ("There is no house to sack among these hills/Nor beautiful woman to be carried off") Cuchulain declares that he has not come all the way for frolics but to find "a well wherein/Three hazels drop their nuts and withered leaves,/And where a solitary girl keeps watch/Among grey boulders./He who drinks, they say, of that miraculous water/lives for ever."

From now on, Cuchulain represents romantic idealism, and if there is any characterization at all in this play it is in the Old Man's weird descriptions of the Woman of the Sidha, the hawk, and the mountain witches who are only indirectly and occasionally present in this play. Mr. Parkinson's remark is quite justified that: "From Yeats' point of view, the tragic hero serves the same purpose, our occult symbol serves: by contemplating him we can attain to unity with the 'anima mundi' for he personifies a universal passion in much the same way that a symbol (the two trees, the rose and lily) concretizes."¹⁸

Cuchulain, Naise, Seanchan, Deirdre—indeed all of Yeats' tragic heroes—are noble persons who live in terms of guiding passions that are too large for a limited temporal structure. When the conflict reaches a climax, the hero then asserts his force of being in an extravagant gesture: Deirdre's suicide (in *Deirdre*), Cuchulain's fight with the waves (in *On Baile's Strand*), Cuchulain's attempt to turn the green helmet into a drinking-cup to be shared by all (in *The Green Helmet*), are examples of this. The gesture is meaningless except as an expression of the hero's passionate nature. The gesture is, to Yeats' mind, the essence of tragedy.

II

The second aspect of Yeats' 'subjectivity,' that falls back on the inner conflicts of a subjective hero and stresses the literal meaning of the term 'antithetical', (another term for 'subjective' in Yeats' vocabulary) is another strong motivation behind some of the plays by Yeats and Tagore. With these questions, however, is inevitably connected the conception of Yeatsian 'mask' which we must understand very clearly. The 'mask' is the complete realization, or the idealized self of the half-grown, but developing subjective self; to put it in terms of a scientific metaphor, it is the culmination of an atom into a molecule. We will try to show now that a 'subjective' hero,

motivated by an urge to act, puts on a mask that negates the quality of his initial self.

Yeats' *The Cuchulain Plays* (*On Baile's Strand*, *The Green Helmet*, *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, *The Death of Cuchulain*) illustrate this point very clearly. When Yeats chose the figure of Cuchulain from Irish legends, it was not simply that he had a sceptical or reserved attitude towards the antique story. His point of view entails a generous recognition of the value of heroic revolt, courage, and love ; but they are placed in a context which proves tragic because of some element which is thwarting and contradictory in the nature of heroic acts, the man who performs them, the spirit which inspires them, or the world in which they are done. In all these plays, Cuchulain always seems to be rather introvert, snobbish and talkative, but only initially, because, spurred by exterior factors to act, he, sometimes even unwillingly, becomes a man of action and achieves his antithetical mask. By action, I mean a concrete dramatic act in the play which, in most cases, turns the future course of events; otherwise Cuchulain, hero as he is, is supposed to bask in the memory of his past actions or the coming glory of his future ones.

Let us take *On Baile's Strand* to illustrate the point. The play, of course, starts with a basic conflict between Cuchulain, a subjective hero, and his antagonist, Conchobar the king. To Conchobar's statement, "I would leave a strong and settled country to my children"¹⁹ Cuchulain's answer is:

Are my shins speckled with the heat of the fire,
Or have my hands no skill but to make figures
Upon the ashes with a stick?
Am I so slack and idle that I need a whip
Before I serve you?²⁰

But Cuchulain takes a long time to be drawn into any specific action, and pestered constantly by Conchobar to take an oath to serve the country he finally gives in: "I will take and keep this oath, and from this day/I shall be what you please, my chicks, my nestlings." Then persuaded by Conchobar, he finally takes the challenge of Conlaoch, a visitor from Aoife's country, (who is no other but his own son whom he does not recognize), kills him, and upon the subsequent knowledge that the victim was his son, kills himself fighting the mad waves of an ocean. Through an action which he initially does not

want to perform, Cuchulain, in his death, receives his antithetical self.

The shift of the subjective hero from his initial status to a fairly new role constitutes the dramatic structure of *At the Hawk's Well* also. From the Old Man, who has been waiting by the well for fifty years for a chance to drink the mysteriously flowing water, cheated, somehow, by the dancers who guard the well in the form of a hawk, Cuchulain learns the whole story about the well. Up until now he is a man of courage, lofty dreams, and even of vision, but not, in any strict sense—and we must remember this—a man of action. The action begins when Cuchulain stares into the hawk's eyes, and the moment he does so, he is not only subject to the curse but is also changed into a failure-figure, so very different from his initial position. He is lured back from the flowing water by a dance, and comes back to find the well dry. When Ronald Peacock comments: "In Yeats the new subject for observation is the life of the soul and spiritual flowers, and so the progression is from inward to outward, unseen to seen, a sensuous world of drama shaping itself upon an ideal world of spirit",²¹ he also supports our view that a subjective hero, urged by exterior motivations and sometimes by a sense of duty, comes out of his cocoon, becomes involved in exterior reality, and assumes a status completely different from what he used to be.

In Tagore's *Muktadhārā* (Free Current, 1922) and *Rakta-karabi* (Red Oleanders, 1925), this aspect of the subjective hero is equally discernible. Abhijit, the hero in *Mukta-dhārā*, is not taken from any legend or mythology; he is Tagore's own creation, but Tagore has made him sufficiently distant, and ambiguous by attributing a mysterious origin to his birth. It is no use belabouring this point, but we must notice that Tagore, like Yeats, likes to create heroes who achieve their antithetical mask through a sudden action, and end their lives somewhat disastrously. In Tagore's *Red Oleanders* we find still more examples to illustrate this point.

In *Red Oleanders* we find a King, hidden permanently behind a decorated cobweb, who rules ruthlessly over a group of subterranean mine-workers. In course of time, he is confronted with a charming girl, Nandini, who represents all that is absent in the King, beauty, freshness, amity, spontaneity, and who coaxes him to come out of the lifeless cobweb. The King's slow, but gradually softening attitude towards Nandini is typical of the triumph over a soulless individual

to another possessing a soul. He, in fact, falls in love with her, and is disappointed by the knowledge that Nandini is already in love with Ranjan, the unseen hero of the play, who never appears on the stage at all. The information we gather about Ranjan from various characters is rather interesting:

Nandini—Some one loves red oleanders and calls me by that name. It is in remembrance of him that I wear these flowers.²²

Nandini—Let me tell you. Every day a pair of blue-throats come and sit on the pomegranate tree in front of my window. Every night, before I sleep, I salute the pole-star and say: Sacred star of constancy, if a feather from the wings of the blue-throats finds its way into my room, then I will know my Ranjan is coming. This morning, as soon as I woke, I found a feather on my bed.²³

Headman—Threaten him, he bursts out laughing. Asked why he laughs, he says solemnity is the mask of stupidity and he has come to take it off.²⁴

Governor—Hello, is not that Ranjan himself going along the road, thrumming an old guitar? Impudent rascal! He does not even care to hide.²⁵

We can see even from this random information that Ranjan, a typical subjective hero, conscious of his own potentialities, imaginative, poetic, contemplative, is suddenly drawn into a dramatic action (the act of liberating the miners from the clutches of a soulless, mechanical system) and achieves this antithetical mask in the same way as Cuchulain or Abhijit did:

Nandini—I await that revelation. Open your door.

(The door opens, the King appears)

Oh, who is that,—lying on the floor,—is it not Ranjan himself?

King—What did you say? Ranjan! How can that possibly be?

Nandini—Yes, this is indeed my Ranjan:

King—Then why did he not give his name? Why did he fling me his challenge?

Nandini—Wake, Ranjan, it is I, your Red Oleander! King, why does he not wake?²⁶

The end of the play, again, is interesting for another reason. The King, who realizes that he has killed Ranjan, although unknow-

ingly, and is visibly perplexed by his own change that has already taken place, thanks to Nandini, wants to break his own flagstaff, symbolic of his own tyrannical kingdom, and breaks it immediately. But like the Wiseman in Yeats' *The Hour-Glass* who taught soullessness and atheism to his pupils until an angel really appeared before his vision, and he was confronted with a choice:

Angel—Though you may not undo what you have done,
 I have this power — if you but find one soul,
 Before the sands have fallen, that still believes,
 One fish to lie and spawn among the stones
 Till the great fisher's net is full again,
 You may, the purgatorial power being passed,
 Spring to your face.²⁷

and, in spite of his frantic attempts, could not find anybody to agree with him now, the King in *Red Oleanders* was similarly opposed by his own guards when he wanted to break the flagstaff.

Guards (rushing up) — What are you doing, King? You dare break the flagstaff, the holiest symbol of divinity? ... What a terrible sin! ... Comrades, let us go and inform our governors.²⁸

III

Unlike Shaw and even unlike Yeats, Tagore has been very reticent about his views on stagecraft. By views I mean here written documents. Mr. Kironmoy Raha, an Indian drama-reviewer, has collected, in one place,²⁹ most of Tagore's own comments on dramaturgy—which give an insight into Tagore's dramatic principles and his methods of dramaturgy. They are as following:

*Bharat's Natya Shastra*³⁰ describes the stage but there is no mention of painted scenes. I do not think that the omission indicates any great loss.... The art of acting has to be subservient to the poetry (of the written words). But that does not mean that it will be a slave to other arts.

*

Needless to say, the words in the play are essential to the actor—but why the painted scenes behind the actor? He did not create them and I think that they express some measure of inability, of cowardice, on the part of the actor.

The way in which the professional theatre in Bengal is moving is not at all hopeful. Anyone who has some artistic or aesthetic sense cannot but feel actually uncomfortable there. Is it not possible to start for a new theatre, not for the masses, but for those who want to taste the deliberate pleasures of a fine art!

*

That is why I like the Yatra of Bengal. In the Yatra there is no forbidding separation of the actors from the spectators. There is an easy bond of mutual trust and dependence between them which makes for the success of the task in hand. The poetry which, after all, is the main thing, falls like a spreading fountain through the medium of acting on the gladdened heart of the spectators.

(From an article in *Banga-Darshan*, 1902)

*

The auditorium of the new theatre should not be very large, for it should aim to provide a meeting place for only the discerning and the cultivated. The new theatre's ideal should, more or less, be the same as those of what is known as "Little Theatres" in the Western countries.

(From an issue of *Nachghar*, a Bengali dramatic quarterly, 3rd June, 1927)

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It has the responsibility of drawing apart the curtain of naturalism and reveal the inner reality of things. If there is too much emphasis on imitative naturalism, the inner view becomes clouded.

*

The adornment of the stage in modern European theatres by realistic sets and painted scenes is an intrusion. It is childish, and merely tries to beguile. It is a barrier, put up by force, between literature and the art of the theatre.

(Preface to *Tapati*)

Yeats had been very expressive about his views on dramaturgy, and even a random selection of his own comments would sound very much like Tagore's:

A writer of drama must observe the form as carefully as if it were a sonnet, but he must always deny that there is any subject-matter which is in itself dramatic—any especial emotion fitted to the stage, or that a play has no need to await its audience or to create the interest it lives by.²¹

Above all, for one imagines as one pleases when the eyes are closed, it will be a theatre of speech, the speech of the countryside, the eloquence of poets, of rhythm, of style.³²

I have to find once again singers, minstrels, and players who love words more than any other thing under heaven, for without fine words there is no literature. I have to create a theatre of speech, of romance, of extravagance.³³

There is no doubt that both Yeats and Tagore were dissatisfied with the then existing stage of Ireland and Bengal respectively, but apart from this historical factor, there is, in their dramaturgy and even stagecraft, the extension of the same principle of 'subjectivity' that would shape the content of most of their plays. A subjective hero, who has the potentiality of perfection in him, wants to achieve this perfection by merging himself with the spirit of nature, the Godhead, or whatever the 'ideal mask' happens to be. This cannot be done very realistically, because to find an image, or even an atmosphere, to embody the process of 'subjective' perfection, a playwright has to fall back upon the techniques of symbolism. A subjective hero in Yeats' plays, and especially in Tagore's, is an individual who has, in a finite set-up, the grasp of the infinite, however metaphysical it might sound, and according to Carlyle, "In the symbol proper, what we can call a symbol, there is ever, more or less distinctly and directly, some embodiment and revelation of the infinite; the infinite is made to blend itself with the finite, to stand visible and as it were, attainable there."³⁴ To do full justice to a 'subjective' individual, a playwright has to use symbols, and not allegories, because, according to Yeats,

A symbol is indeed the possible expression of some invisible essence, a transparent lamp about a spiritual flame; while allegory is one of many possible representations of an embodied thing, or familiar principle, and belongs to fancy, and not to imagination; the one is a revelation, the other an amusement.³⁵

The symbol, thus defined, is symptomatic of the qualities of a subjective hero, and vice versa. Again, the unity of being which a subjective hero wants to achieve in his life means, in other terms, his union with nature or the spirit of nature. Nature, therefore, plays an important part in creating a particular kind of symbol in the plays

Dreaming of the Bones, *At The Hawk's Well*, etc.) used the traditional Greek method of introducing a chorus through the musicians and attendants, but, in some of his plays, he suddenly changes the status of a particular character from his prescribed role to a generalizing medium, like Emer in *The Green Helmet* who, watching the male characters, including her husband Cuchulain, fight for the green helmet, suddenly bursts into a song, through which the audience comes to know about Cuchulain's strength and valour. In some other cases (in *On Baile's Strand*) Yeats uses intuitively-enlightened fools, who, at certain important stages, would provide the audience with some important information. In reply to the blind man's retort ("Hush! . . . I heard the men who were running away say he had red hair, that he had come from Aoife's country, that he was coming to kill Cuchulain") the fool serves the purpose of a chorus and says, "Nobody can do that."

(To a tune)

Cuchulain has killed kings,
Kings and sons of kings,
Dragons out of the water,
And witches out of the air,
Banachas and Bonachas and people of the woods.

Tagore uses his chorus in a slightly different way. He creates stock-characters who appear recurrently in different plays under similar situations, and usually voice the playwright's point of view. The figure of 'Thākurdādā' (or the 'Gaffer' that occurs in *The Post Office* and *The King of the Dark Chamber*) who seems to be an ambassador of the 'subjective' individuals to an objective world, has the role of a chorus, and Mr. Edward Thompson has commented: "But 'Thakurdada' is just a nuisance. He and his following of hilarious 'have-nothings' act as a regular chorus, and he introduces every new action of the play."⁴²

A symbolic play tends to lose its symbolism if the symbols are treated rather heavy-handedly by the author. According to Stanislavsky: "To stage symbolical plays successfully, it is necessary to know the role and the play perfectly, to understand its spiritual contents, to crystallize its essence, to polish the crystal, to find a clear, bright and artistic form for it, synthesizing all the multiform and complex con-

tents of the play. . . . Symbolism, impressionism, and all the other isms in art belong to super-consciousness and begin where the ultra-natural ends."⁴³

Both Yeats and Tagore were aware of this phenomenon. Disgusted with ultra-naturalism Yeats, because he could find no model nearer home for the archetypally symbolic dramas he wanted to write, "founded on the Japanese theatre after a protracted search."⁴⁴ And Tagore, according to some critics, sought his inspiration in the Yatra, the village-operas of Bengal.

Besides the archetypes, Yeats also noticed in the representation of the Noh plays the simplicity of the scenery and the simplicity of the musical accompaniment, and as Professor Ojima Shotaro has observed: "A plain, undecorated stage offered a greater opportunity for the imagination to wander and to create for itself the necessary scenery. . . . As a substitute for landscape he (Yeats) wished to follow the tradition of the Noh and have three performers who sat in front of a wall or patterned screen and described vocally the landscape of the event."⁴⁵

Edmond Dulac helped Yeats choose the musical instruments for his newly-oriented dramas: Fue (flute), ko-tsuzunic (small drum), o-tsuzumi (large drum), taiko (gong-like drum), etc. On the programme-note of *At the Hawk's Well* was written: "It is the avoidance of realism that makes the Noh so different from ordinary theatre and so akin to Yeats' own lofty ideals for his poetic drama. The mask, by rendering an emotion, abstract and entire, can be one of those profound emotions that exist only in solitude and silence."⁴⁶ The four plays for dancers (*At the Hawk's Well*, *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, *Calvary*), as well as *The Cat and the Moon* were modelled after Japanese Noh plays.

There was a tradition of a similar kind of dramatic festival in Bengal, and Mr. Binoy Kumar Sarkar, in his *The Folk Element in Hindu Culture*⁴⁷ gives us an interesting account of an ancient Hindu institution, partly religious and partly dramatic, known as the Gambhira festival which is entirely connected with the name and cult of Siva. Mr. Sarkar thinks that "to a certain extent, the literature of the Gambhira-cycles may be compared with the Mystery and Miracle plays in old English and Noh plays of Japan." The Yatra, which, is, in a way, the culmination of these folk festivals, "whether ancient or modern, is a combination of two elements—the dramatic and

lyric. . . . The hero sings, the villain sings, and, in fact, all the dramatic personnel sing on the slightest provocation." Besides this tradition of music, the Yatra had exactly similar simple stage-devices that a Noh stage had, which attracted Tagore enormously. In most of his plays (*Sārodotsab*, *Phālguni*, *Achalāyatan*, *Red Oleanders*) a "village pathway" is given a rather conspicuous importance, a pathway on which most of the characters would meet, and which is reminiscent, however vaguely, of open-air quality of the Yatra stage which used to be built beside a village pathway.

IV

It is not difficult to see that both Yeats and Tagore infused their drama with as much poetry as possible, but it will be a gross simplification to suggest that they used drama only as another medium for writing poetry. Sometimes they conferred upon their 'subjective tradition' almost the status of pure poetry, but they always confronted it with an opposing tradition—not because they had to, but because their vision of life would have been incomplete without a scheme of dramatic reality. Besides, their conception of drama was not incompatible with their conception of poetry, and both Yeats and Tagore wanted their art to reach a perfection where all the mediums of human expression commingle with each other, and mix profitably. Ultimately, this is the vision of a grand ritual on which Yeats has spoken in his *Theatre*⁴⁸ ("The theatre began in ritual, and it cannot come to its greatness again without recalling words to their ancient sovereignty."), and in *Certain Noble Plays of Japan*,⁴⁹ ("I love all the arts that can still remind me of their origin among their common people, and my ears are only comfortable when the singer sings as if mere speech had taken force, when he appears to have passed into song almost imperceptively. I am bored and wretched, when he is no longer a human being but an invention of science."). Tagore was equally opposed to mechanical human beings, and it is interesting to notice that both Yeats and Tagore were prepared to push their heroes along an ascending ladder of values to an extent that they no longer remain as human beings but become abstract symbols, and yet they would certainly not tolerate in their heroes any degrading influence of scientific mechanization.

I, therefore, want to classify both Tagore and Yeats as authors

of 'pure dramatic literature,' and I am using the term 'pure' for the following reasons. First, they professedly attempted to 'save' their plays from 'realism' which they considered impure; second, they wanted to return to a source where poetry and drama are not in contradistinction to each other but are twin-expressions of a fundamental ritual; third, which is very important for our discussion, by championing the 'subjective tradition' instead of the 'objective' one they championed, a view of life which leans completely on an ideal code of values. What Ernest Renan thinks about the Celtic mind,⁵⁰ "The Celt is not melancholy, as Faust or Werther are melancholy, from 'a perfectly definite motive,' but because of something about him 'unaccountable, defiant and titanic,'" and what H. M. Pim comments in his *Short History of Celtic Philosophy*,⁵¹ "In almost every case the Celt gains the spiritual victory if his enemy happens to have gained the physical," can be applied to Yeatsian heroes in general, and if we think of Bibhuti in Tagore's *Mukta-dhārā* and Ranjan of *Rakta-Karabi*, we find the same ideal code of values in Tagore's dramaturgy also. Any objective correlative to embody this spiritual function has to be sought in a world other than conventional 'realism,' because it seems to achieve its own perfection to the degree it moves away from our common notion of realism and becomes, in a sense, a pure symbol.

What John Gassner⁵² terms 'illusion of non-reality' with relation to symbolist plays in general, and Yeats' plays in particular, seems to be quite tenable except that, unlike Mr. Gassner, we do not like to use it only pejoratively. Both Yeats and Tagore created this illusion of non-reality in their plays not only because, as Mr. Gassner seems to suggest, "it reflects the belief that we live in a mysterious, 'poetic' universe," but also to create a dramatic method to do justice to their ideal values. Both of them had special missions to perform. P. Guha-thakurta in his *The Bengali Drama*⁵³ comments, "It should be pointed out at the very outset that Rabindranath has tried to keep himself scrupulously aloof from the professional Bengali stage," and the reason for this aloofness can be attributed to his search for a purer variety of dramatic literature. And for the same reason, Yeats remained indifferent to the fashionable dramatic practices and created a 'theatre of speech, of romance, of extravagance.'⁵⁴ The purity they wanted to achieve in their dramatic works is neither pretentious nor a result of snobbery, but of an aesthetic value derived, organically, from their 'subjective' conception of art and life.

- ¹ W. B. Yeats, *A Vision*, (London, 1962), p. 13.
- ² Morton Irving Selden, *William Butler Yeats: The Poet as a Mythmaker*, 1965-1939 (East Lansing, 1962), p. 76.
- ³ F. A. C. Wilson, *W. B. Yeats and Tradition*, (New York, 1958), p. 23.
- ⁴ Ibid., p. 23.
- ⁵ W. B. Yeats, *Plays and Controversies*, (London, 1923), pp. 99-100.
- ⁶ F. A. C. Wilson, *W. B. Yeats and Tradition*, (New York, 1958), p. 21.
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 22.
- ⁸ Peter Ure, *Yeats the Playwright*, (London, 1963), p. 134.
- ⁹ "This human species is honey to all beings, and all beings are honey to this human species. (So with) the bright, human being who is in this human species, and, with reference to the body, the bright, immortal being who is identified with the human species. This is immortality. This is all." Brhadāranayaka Upanishad, translated by Sri Ramakrishna Math (Madras, 1951), p. 171.
- ¹⁰ Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats*, (New York, 1954), p. 42.
- ¹¹ W. B. Yeats, "The Celtic Element in Literature", *Essays and Introduction* (New York, 1961), p. 187.
- ¹² Ibid., p. 187.
- ¹³ Rabindranath Tagore, Grantha Parichay, *Rabindra Rachanābali*, (Collected works of R. Tagore), (Calcutta, 1953), Vol. I, pp. 628-629.
- ¹⁴ Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats*, (New York, 1954), p. 105.
- ¹⁵ P. Guha-thakurta, "Rabindranath Tagore", *The Bengali Drama—Its Origin and Development*, (London, 1930), p. 217.
- ¹⁶ W. B. Yeats, *Essays*, (London, 1924), p. 298.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., p. 140.
- ¹⁸ T. Parkinson, *The Dramatic Lyric*, (Berkeley, 1951), p. 80.
- ¹⁹ W. B. Yeats, *On Baile's Strand*, in *The Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats*, (London, 1952), p. 255.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 255.
- ²¹ Ronald Peacock, *The Poet in the Theatre*, (New York, 1946), p. 127.
- ²² Rabindranath Tagore, *Red Oleanders*, (London, 1961), p. 84.
- ²³ Ibid., p. 93.
- ²⁴ Ibid., p. 96.
- ²⁵ Ibid., p. 98.
- ²⁶ Ibid., p. 165.
- ²⁷ W. B. Yeats, *The Hour-Glass*, in *The Collected Plays of W. B. Yeats*, (London, 1952), p. 310.
- ²⁸ Rabindranath Tagore, *Red Oleanders*, (London, 1961), p. 170.
- ²⁹ Tagore Issue, *Natya*, Theatre Arts Journal, *Tagore on Theatre*, (New Delhi, 1961), pp. 6-9.
- ³⁰ The classical text of Sanskrit dramaturgy.
- ³¹ W. B. Yeats, *The Poetical Works*, VII, *Dramatic Poems*, (New York, 1912), p. 87.
- ³² Ibid., p. 7.
- ³³ Ibid., p. 523, Appendix IV.

- ¹⁰ "Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, (Boston, 1885), p. 166.
- ¹¹ W. B. Yeats, "Symbolism in Poetry", *Essays and Introductions*, (London, 1961), p. 163.
- ¹² Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats*, (New York, 1954), p. 24.
- ¹³ Rabindranath Tagore, "Individual and Universe", *Sadhana*, (New York, 1913), p. 4.
- ¹⁴ Pramatha Nath Bisi, *Rabindra Natya-Prabaha*, (The Stream of Tagore's Plays), (Calcutta, 1942), pp. 128-129.
- ¹⁵ T. R. Henn, *The Lonely Tower*, (London, 1950), pp. 120-121.
- ¹⁶ Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats*, (New York, 1954), pp. 30-31.
- ¹⁷ Rabindranath Tagore, *Shanti Niketan*, Vol. II, (Calcutta, 1916), p. 55.
- ¹⁸ Edward J. Thomson, *Rabindranath Tagore, the Poet and Dramatist*, (London, 1916), p. 121.
- ¹⁹ Konstantin Sergeevich Stainslavsky, *My Life in Art*, (Boston, 1924),
- ²⁰ F. A. C. Wilson, *Yeats' Iconography*, (London, 1960), p. 15.
- ²¹ Faubian Bowers, *Japanese Theatre*, (New York, 1959), p. 121.
- ²² W. B. Yeats, *Four Plays for Dancers*, (London, 1921), p. 85.
- ²³ Benoy Kumar Sirkar, *The Folk Element in Hindu Culture*, (London, 1917), p. 12.
- ²⁴ W. B. Yeats, "Certain Noble Plays of Japan", *Essays and Introductions*, (London, 1921), p. 170.
- ²⁵ W. B. Yeats, "Theatre", *Essays and Introductions*, (London, 1961), p. 170.
- ²⁶ Ernest Renan, *The Poetry of the Celtic Races*, (London, 1896), p. 271.
- ²⁷ H. M. Pim, *Short History of Celtic Philosophy*, (Dundaigan Press, Dudlak, 1920), p. 16.
- ²⁸ John Gassner, *Form and Idea in Modern Theatre*, (New York, 1958).
- ²⁹ P. Guha-Thakurta, *The Bengali Drama*, (London, 1930), p. 86.
- ³⁰ W. B. Yeats, *The Poetical Works of W. B. Yeats*, "Dramatic Poems", (New York, 1912), Appendix IV, p. 523.

ON POETRY, SCIENCE & RELIGION :
A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH

IN entering the relational sphere of science, art and religion, may I plead for an intergral approach ? This does not mean the blurring of specified responsibilities but an attempt to use the new insights to which we are now exposed. The disciplines of science and the humanities can no longer separate themselves by sealed frontiers. Unilateral aggression is not our method but the frontiers of reason and the emotional values, for instance, can unite rather than divide. The anachronistic battle between analysis and intuition need not be waged in view of the fact that higher reason and feelings guide the technologist as well as the creative artist. Truth involves the knowledge of nature and the application of such knowledge in our planetary society: a harmony of both is needed to enhance the deep artistry of human welfare.

Today the nuclear expert, to slightly change Oppenheimer's words, is conscious of nuclear sin. Brilliant methods for vaporising cities and cinderizing a whole human community no longer suffice for a generation of responsible technologists. The intangibles of morality and art, of spirited citizenship have eroded the complacent domain of scientific power. The pressure is on, and is increasing. Neither, shall I add, can the man of faith dwell apart from his day or a true artist fail to see life and livelihood in the same prismatic vision. Perhaps the pressures of a neighbourly world, the inescapable correlations and an effective urge to use knowledge gained from many fields has made it more difficult to preserve sanctified monopolies.

This sense of mutuality is not new, but the door is more widely open. More traffic is there in the corridors between the laboratory and the exhibition, let us say, of contemporary art. Hence the modern

insistence on simultaneous priorities. In a civilized society there is no need of priority as between great music, good drinking water, between poetry and piety. These belong together as they did in a wholesome phase of culture, only such phases were rare whether in ancient Egypt or Greece or in Asian contexts. The lop-sided emphasis on either pragmatic or experiential reality still continues but we, even in our inequities, are more sensitively conscious of the inseparable nature of man, of world-wide humanity and tend to cultivate inner depth while planning for adequate service. The adventure of man is more real to us.

Consider the amorphous or disjunctive cycles through which science and art and faith have passed in man's chromatic history. In the primal dawn of civilization, about which we know little, a sense of mystery and wonder seems to have prevailed. But in the Dark Ages, so-called in Europe and paralleled perhaps by some of the later Puranic periods in India, the early encounter and revealed light seems to have been lost in a confusion of categories. Poetry and divination, phantasy and essential fact, magic blends of morals and minerals appeared together in a haze. Necromancy was a positive science; the devil or the evil eye had to be propitiated by human torture and priestly theories. In West and East science and religion were denied and were submerged in repressive patterns of society where contradictions were resolved by dogma. It is true that not the same persons did the contrary things, nor do we forget the transcending witness of Man the Divine in all ages and lands. To that I shall refer later. But the tyranny of conscriptive religion with or without political and economic motivation, and the legendary weight of make-believe science had a crushing impact on the human spirit. Bee-hive art and rhetorical literature belonged to the same age. We see why the great separation came.

The rationalists or the scientific type of men drifted away, cold-eyed, unconvinced, bent on calculated heresy. Religionists, straying further away from religion, fastened upon more detailed inventories of heaven and hell secure in their fatalistic or whimsically generous certitudes. Men wavered between holy and evil spirits on the one side and mundane patrons on the other; willing to strike a compromise. Even great art felt the sudden schismatic tear of alienation between the sacred and the profane; the central divide ruled out any commerce between genuine holiness and the initiatives of

national research which goes with spiritual truth. It is not the purpose here to attempt a historical survey. Both science and religion have survived the processes of alienation. From the nineteenth century and earlier, a new encounter, altogether in the direction of effective co-operation, has taken place in the exchange of insights and reappraisals both in science and in religious thought. The impact on literature has been tremendous. the exhilarating freedom to range in many dimensions has always been the artist's prerogative, but a closed civilization, a nationalistic society—I speak of fanaticism, not of true patriotic fervor—has inhibited great art. The renaissance of art and faith, of scientific clarity along with profound humanity is a fairly recent event though, as indicated before, cycles of renaissance and reversal are a part of our historical civilization. Today we face a new opportunity. This is true of Asia, Africa, and the Western hemisphere, in the islands and mainlands that comprise our human earth. Crescended by the shadow of death, we are yet more alive to life's resources than in other centuries.

But before I enter the modern scene, let me bow to the great spirit of man and to our supreme revelations. While deploring fetishism and irresponsible patterns of culture which decimated human rights in the name of religion or science—this continues today—we recognize the unwaning splendor of truth as revealed in all stages of humanity. Buddhism swept across transcontinental Asia melting the stone of human hearts and breathing compassion into sculptured architecture. The Buddha's message of mercy and of shining reason was and is a transforming power in liturgy and literature in dance and song, in the memoried chronicles of human beatitude. Christianity is not a local phenomenon ; it has humanity as its stage, bringing God's love to man. To take a single city like Florence or Assisi and trace the effect of one faith on painting, fresco, drama, literature, and religious traditions would give us a glimpse of the power that changed human civilization. The regenerative process has triumphed over the dark forces of acquisition and coercion, proclaiming the ultimacy of redemptive love. Islam sparkled in blue minarets and domes in starlight or under the desert dawn, speaking in the voice of One God which reached the ends of the earth. Sufi mysticism, Arabic science, and juridical law give to West and East a new strength for democratic equality. These historical events transcended history and became timelessly topical. Knowing spiritual Hinduism through tradition and

circumstance, but above all through contact with such towering personalities as Tagore and Gandhi, I shall fail if I do not stress its inclusive glory. Inimical to syncretism, but seeking divine affirmation from all religions and lofty traditions, Hinduism has opened a horizon of faith to the entire mankind. Like all ancient and deeply rooted religions it has held on, through hard struggles and falling levels, to revealed knowledge tested and renewed by countless witness and practitioners. Here again is the story of epics and lyrical poetry, temples and Universities flowering then and now over a vast continuity of India's historical civilization.

Let me move on to the poetry of modern science before I conclude with illustrations from the luminous influence of science on poetry. In a way, I think, a Rachel Carsons in her descriptions of the upper levels of the ocean is exact and ineffable in her scientific writings. Her precise sight of the abyssal depths, unsunned and dark, where the fish take on phosphorescent light, is the authentic poetry of science. Here mysticism does take a grain of sand or a blue flower and sees in them a more detailed and to us a more cognate wonder than many mystics did. Exact knowledge which kindles the higher imagination can harm neither poetry nor science, and when such knowledge is itself the convergent point of shared insights from many disciplines, a new order of beauty which is truth, raises its banner. Herzog writing on Annapurna in the high glittering Himalayas, uses a mountaineer's observation with a natural insight. Perilously poised on a sliver of rock-ledge, with the mist closing in and thousands of feet of exposure below he uses a reticent language which is the quintessence of art. Incidentally, the Himalayas and the Manosarovar have touched off serenity and grandeur from the pens of intrepid Western pioneers like Sven Hedin no less than they have generated psalms and *slokas* all the way from Kalidasa to Tagore. The impenetrable but visible mystery of God's hand in His creation has drawn countless pilgrims, scientists and artists, and made them share a mutual inspiration. Science has not robbed the night sky of its glory but added to the delineation of celestial reality. To spend an hour looking through the giant telescope at Palomar is to be physically nearer to unutterable sublimity, and the astronomers today would confess to the same experience. A hard-flying French pilot, Exupery, who died in flight during the last world war, read maps with delicate tracings from his own historical mind in order to decipher the sand

dunes of the Middle East or unravel the Ionian islands below. The call for high instrumental knowledge, plus an air-cooled engine in the pilot's own brain is seldom a barrier to the higher vision. Einstein, following truth, climbed the mathematical ladder into galactic space, as he said; what he saw in number and form and radiance was *dhyāna* in a truly modern and cosmic sense. The high walls of altitude, the held space in a botanist's flower petal, the layers of time etched in sedimentary rock or in giant tree-rings have produced hammered words, like Homer's verse, invested with a new lustration. To read Loren Eiseley, the well-known professor of Anthropology, is to traverse *The Firmament of Time* as one of his books is called, with a materiality which is spiritual. A bone from a million years, petrified fossils dated through carbon reaction are further substantiated by his enormous knowledge in art and cultural history. Quaintly he says that he may after all be very near to prayer as he has so often knelt down to observe a modest crustacean on the sand. Science today, in numerous skilled reports by top technical experts, has richly contributed to authentic art. And true faith is not distant, either.

What about the evidence of art and poetry today? Science mainly pursues the sequential, the cause-effect-cause chain—incidentally it may hint the original why—and tries to verify, control and repeat the processive chain. Actually it does more, for a true scientist is still himself, often a highly moral and spiritual individual. The persistent thrust of Science, however, is in the region of the *How*, and not a search for ultimacy. But the poet must also ask *Why?*—like Rodin's figure of *Thinking Man*—facing both himself and the world that is. Hence the shortest poem in the English language—"I, Why?". The poet-anthologist who wrote it did not shake the world with the couplet, and yet amusingly we can use it as a long statement.

A closer approximation between science and art is witnessed in the modern attitude. The poet is liable to bring the insights of science and religion together. No poet who is fulfilling his job as an artist of wonder can fail to be dazzled by the quiet unassuming victories of science which have deepened, enlivened and exalted man's life. When the miracle of life is forgotten, there is generally a proliferation of miracles to which imaginative religionists and their followers contribute; at such a time, the scientist, like the man of faith, proclaims the one supreme miracle. Profound moral and social instincts cluster round this recognition of life. Louis Pasteur, spending a life-time

probing into minute biological mysteries, and seeking to analyse types of disease, increased like Dr. Salk today the power to serve truth. An innocent child saved, in a specific sense, from helpless life-long agony touches us with a new and responsible hope which both religion and art must, and do, glorify. No comparisons are needed, but a Chaitanya or a Saint Francis serving a leper identify the same divine love, spelt in different ways. Dedicated researchers who have found means to control or cure leprosy belong to the same order, though human levels vary.

A modern poet, in particular, if his romantic vision is not separated from reality is able to see the spirituality of science in ancient contexts and new. Those who respond to this authentic modern approach, no matter what they call themselves, are both religious and scientific. It is, therefore, no cult of personality that makes the film portray Dr. Albert Schweitzer in an equatorial swamp, giving not six weeks or six months but half a century to save and relieve a few lives. Where is divinity to be found if it is not also there where, as Tagore put it, the tiller is tilling the hard ground? One might, in a topical vein, add divinity to a hard working nurse rescuing a mother and a child while we may deny godliness to some professional priest. Air hostesses spurning personal safety in order to get an elderly passenger out of a burning plane, a food chemist determined to protect the public from poisoned, adulterated food, a human guinea-pig willingly and ethically undergoing physical agony so that drug effects could be controlled and made benign are partners in a spiritual commitment. Our whole attitude toward mentally ill persons, or toward the treatment of prisoners, to take but two crucial issues, has changed, thanks largely to the influence of scientists and moral men. The fact that classified spirituality is not sought but that a human face suffices, that the life divine is seen in a bus-driver or in a mature statesman, or in a street corner shop where a brave refugee has started a new economic and family life is proof that literature today has rooted itself deeper in God's world. We are giving religion a more inclusive meaning when bereft of special dispensations and dogma we see redemption in the special traffic policeman where he provides safety to school children running back home. To the extent modern art has imbibed the finer spirit of technology, and seen a new spiritual combination as between holiness and clean drinking water, rejecting industrial or rural slums as being equally

anti-social and spiritually unromantic, Art is awake. Think of the paupersim and the ruined huts from which soul savers and sentimental artists alike derived gilt-edged compensation. Not to hunt for a new religious label but simply to change oneself within and to change one's view of life may be a part of modern theism. This is not enough unless transcendence becomes a transformation, which in any case, is not an intellectual or vocational phenomenon. *Prasādam adhigachchate*, the attainment of divine grace has to be recognized.

Today's art newly informed by the spirit of humanity, caught in a sudden upsurge of world-wide hope and anxiety, is not alien to the traditional religions, but seeks fresh interpretations, and above all, clear-sighted implementation. Actually the desire not to exclude but to include has produced in art and poetry a new metaphysics of incongruity. Life happens together, in time and in simultaneous history; the world is one, so is the universe; linear or sonic combinations would, as it were, yield the secret. Here the change in art and poetry is largely semantic; the modern creativist is in a hurry to find a new alphabet of expression. But behind the excitement we detect a new conscientiousness, and, except to those on the fringe, truth has become real. Even the seemingly episodic is actually meant to be a whole life transcript; colors and patterns drawn from new artefacts and cultural values are projected with passionate faith. Youthful exuberance apart, and often without the genius of individual greatness, the artist today seeks the bridge between science and service, between art and welfare and, above all, between religion and daily humanity. We cannot dismiss his concern as merely cerebral, or as a craft-conscious mania. In different ways the emerging artist of West and East reveals an eagerness for clarification, for genuine illumination of personal and social integrity. Scientists also in impressive numbers have responded to an ethical and sometimes an alien spiritual demand. Can religion confess to a new stir coming from science and art?

Two poets can be singled out as supreme exemplars of a modern break-through in art and faith. Neither Robert Frost nor Rabindranath Tagore were fully modern excepting in the real sense. Perhaps, let me add, some typical and even important traits of the modernist may have eluded them. But though not comparing the two figures in depth or range of genius, both Tagore and Frost were "emphati-

cally human" and "rooted in the divine". They did not ignore scientific humanism but absorbed it in their responsive art. Frost was, to say the least, no fanatic regarding modern mechanics but with all his conservatism he once saw an early aeroplane as a gift of mercy. His daughter was dying. She had contracted an infection at child-birth and was being flown to Mayo Clinic while still there was hope. "Three days ago," writes Frost, "we put her in a small airplane with doctor and nurse The thousand-mile flight seems not to have set her back, and here we can expect the miracles of modern science." Of course he did not claim the answer in one exceptional instance, nor did he take science alone and leave it there. The modern faith which combined a father's prayer with an open-minded view of medical science and even of modern transportation is significant. As he concludes, "the blood-transfusions Marjorie's (his daughter's) tenacity, and Elinor's (his wife's) devotion and the mercy of God are our hope".

And yet Frost was attacked by theologians for not being religious, and by scientists for leaning in the other direction. More truly modern than Eliot who gives little value to human thought or action and waits for divine intervention, Frost expressed a poetry of faith which knew science as an ally, as an operative means for the mastery of truth.

Continuing, rather whimsically, a reference to aeroplanes as a possible—I say, possible—merciful help, one admits that on this point the great poet Tagore once missed his own poetic vision. Like Wordsworth who could not help attacking the railway train which would surely chase away the beauty of the English countryside, our poet angrily rhymed against the newer invader. These monstrous machine birds, he rebuked in a poem, interrupt the blue inviolate sky. (And yet this was before the thunderous jets came along!) To deny the exquisite use of man's handiwork, silver wings in a new dimension, was at least a loss of imagery, but the root lay deeper, Tagore felt the same anguish as Gandhiji did in regard to the misuse of technology which was more evident than its relevant service. Actually Tagore who rode an airliner to Iran as a guest of Emperor Riza Shah Pahlevi (the first) had his first inescapable shock at Jask, where the plane halted, from a Royal Air Force Chaplain. Sanctimoniously he was asked for a poet's blessing on the flying flock whose unsecret air-to-ground activities in the Middle East and even in Iran

needed no extra poetic encouragement. The unceremonious but incandescent answer delivered in good English prose is still available.

An evaluation is needed regarding the measure of new aesthetic feelings and of high moral hopes that we may blend today in our criticism of scientific failure. The same unsparing clarity is needed in the exposure of pseudo-religion. Apart from artistic exaggeration or negation of new possibilities there is, of course, the nostalgic element. Lyric country lanes with delicate but fixed associations may make a poet deny the beatific vision that comes even in a supermarket; artists may wistfully and analogically cling to old-world ships for a crossing while gleaming stream-liners, in gold-blue waves, are refused grace. Such traditionalism in thought is understandable, but not necessarily supportable. Equally, the display of supersonic words or slogans in orbit can but raise our eyes without lifting a poem. The quality of affirmation in art and thought is indeed a subtle balance at a point of new encounter.

Poetry, science and religion have in our time absorbed light from each other and extended their own lighted domains. No world-poet of our epoch has conveyed this spiritual reciprocity more deeply than Tagore. The perennial view, the insight as well as the new sight, and far-sight came to him as a single renewal. *Sarvam evābhisanti*, he was fond of quoting from the Upanisads: "he enters the all"—this is India's gift of supreme access. Composed in mind, using the highest reflective reason, the seer is barred nowhere. Truth's fulness, *Satyam*, subsumes facts, discovered or newly known. This for Tagore was a definition, often a redefinition of the infinite; he followed India's sages in viewing Law and the Eternal not as separate but in an unbreakable relationship. Undoubtedly Tagore's early initiation into a discriminative and yet finally unified experience of reality made him feel at home in West and East, in a spiritual commerce between reason and revelation from both sides. The correlations, which all great artists and saints have known, came to him in our new world context. No wonder that Tagore himself, in a single poem contained the dance of creation of which *Natarāja* is a symbol, and the rhythmic constellations of atoms and molecules wheeling in infinitesimal as well as infinitudinal spaces which Science seeks to specify. Imagery and music, interior rhyme and accurate transcripts of thought give to his poem a splendor which can be described as traditionally ultramodern. His poem

satisfies the full paradox. In Odelike verse, sung or incantated, he hymnizes the dance in which

the recalcitrant atoms are tamed
are cadenced into beauty,
the Moon and Sun sparkle in musical anklets
as they move around your feet.

But it is impossible to translate ; the precision of Tagore's thought and craft are lost in the transference. No vague rhapsodies but an acuity, an audacity in perception creates the firm texture. Astrophysics and an initial wonder meet. This poem cites space and time, interiorizes them in the human heart, and projects sorrow's waves and laughter which at least swing into the full joy of the divine dancer.

Some of Tagore's brightest poems touch upon layers of geology or the chemistry of a flower petal, his many travels on man's earth, his nostalgia for lands and homes still unvisited. Science was no enemy but the friendly neighbour, sometimes a rival ; and whether Tagore's spiritual wisdom supported or defied some of the new experimental concepts the terraces of his art and verse were open. From the stars to the child playing on the village dust his songs roamed ; the regional lore of Bengal, the dark monsoon clouds and the canopy of rain, the wide ocean shores and cities claimed and won his songs. Formidable in range and in intense understanding some of his prose, like the article on *My World* ('Āmār Jagat') startle us by an almost prescient view of modern relativity. This philosophical-scientific discourse written with subtle wit and art was published long before the verifications of Max Planck and Einstein. Later he met and discussed with Einstein, holding the wonder-eyed scientist close to his reverence ; also he studied and conversed with many of India's and the world's eminent scientists. As privileged companions, some of us can testify to the evident exaltation that these men and women, I include Madame Curie, felt in testing their science against his poetry.

Ironically gentle, Robert Frost to whom we return, expressed his fellowship with this shattering scientific world in careful, measured, often non-committal praise. The stars he had studied well, both as a farm hand and later as a night-walker who had looked at great trees, and the far-radiant sky. So *Sirius* in proper astronomical order

was no stranger to his starry magnitude. In a poem called "One More Brevity", however, he landed "the old watch-dog Sirius" as an actual stray dog that came at night to his door and vanished at dawn. He knew what his scientist friends would think of all this and was the more emboldened in stating his witty, poetic and somewhat mystical challenge. So he spoke of

The star itself, Heaven's greatest star,
Not a meteorite, but an avatar,
Who had made an overnight descent.

The Star-dog or the Dog-star is real, unaccountable, and made more endearing when one knows about Robert Frost's life of lonely generosity.

"One More Brevity", the poem from which I quoted, is out-distanced and also more sharply contrasted with our earth-home in a poem typically called "Accidentally on Purpose". Quizzically looking at evolution and evolutionists, he is not so sure and doubts who has the last word, the lover or the sure-fire theorist. Here are a few excerpts:

"They mean to tell us all was rolling blind
Till accidentally it hit upon mind
.....

Till Darwin came to earth upon a year
To show the evolution how to steer.
.....

They mean to tell us, though, the Omnibus
had no real purpose till it got to us.

Never believe it. At the very worst
It must have had the purpose from the very first.
Whose purpose is it? His or Hers or Its?
Let's leave it to scientific wits.
Grant me intention, purpose and design —
That's near enough to the Divine.

And yet for all this help of head or brain
How happily instinctive we remain,
Our best guide upward further to the light,
Passionate preference at first sight."

This poem came out in his last book shortly before his death and has

been called a dialogue between art and science; as accurately it can be called a poet's intervention between different types of scientists and theologians. He leaves their company, and remains with their delighted sanction, in the company of those who are "happily instinctive". This "Passionate preference at first sight" is subtly connected with a design, with guidance "upward further to the light" and though it is not apparent, good old Darwin is very much a part of the story.

Another extract from the same context. Writing on the famous flight of the aeroplane Kitty Hawk, he says ;

Pulpiters will censure
Our instinctive venture
Into what they call
The material

.....

But God's own descent
Into flesh was meant
As a demonstration
That the supreme merit
Lay in risking spirit
In transubstantiation.

Though Robert Frost was a non-conformist and kept out of religious and other institutions, these lines speak to every believer's heart. These further lines come toward the end of "Kitty Hawk"

Earth is still our Fate. -----
The uplifted sight
We enjoyed at night
When instead of sheep
We were counting stars,
Not to go to sleep,
But to stay awake !

Science and Art and Religion must remain apart and together. We need the authenticity of unique insights in a *Mantram* or a Quranic *Sura* or in the Lord's Prayer. The sunny Confucian humanity which extends from the family to the Family of Man comes laden with richness in the homely and spiritual *Analects*. But we also need the bio-chemist, the industrialist and the Social Scientist whose importance to modern India and to the human world our President

Dr. Radhakrishnan has been stressing in his recent glowing speeches in the temple city of Madurai and in other precincts.

No more ennobling words can be found in this context than these from the great poet Bharati who belongs to Tamil Nad, to Bharat itself, and to Visva-Bharati in the sense of India and the world together. Invoking the "brethren of our sacred Tamilnad" the poet Bharati claims for them:

All mighty works of art without a flaw,
Most glorious temples, sight-arresting towers.

He continues,

The cherishing of art in every home ;
And schools in every street, that daily grow,
While mighty colleges of learning rise

And in another poem :

No castes or creeds are there
Such differences are most unmeet;
The high are only those who shine
In learning, sense and love divine.

And finally, sustaining the entire discourse on the need of more active traffic between Science, Poetry and Faith, I shall add these words of the great poet Bharati. For him the land of reverence is

The land of learning that hath brought
Great Kamban to the light,
The land whose countless sciences spread.

THE MOTIF OF 'SEVEN BROTHERS' IN FOLK-TALES

ONE of the most remarkable facts of modern cultural development is the increasing interest of modern man in popular literature, in folktales, folksongs and epics. The modern career of the folktale in particular has been astounding. Like the stepdaughter in the fairy tale, who after a long period of suppression and contempt becomes the bride of the king, the folk tale, for so long looked upon as an inferior species of literature belonging to the uneducated classes, has become the object of scientific research, the delight of young and old readers, and a source of inspiration for philosophers and artists of the highest rank. Two reasons, I think, may account for this interesting change. The one is no doubt the subconscious longing of modern man for the supernatural, for a higher world behind the material things that surround him, which becomes only stronger the more it is suppressed by our mechanized ways of life. And the second reason results from modern man's quest for the origin of all things he has come to know; he wants to know, where those wonderful old tales, simple and mysterious at the same time, originated. In fact quite a number of different theories on the origin of the folk tale have been proposed during the last few decades, but it seems that the problem is still unsolved. Moreover, it has become more complicated in modern times than it was, say, in the middle of the nineteenth century, for one particular reason: when the science of folklore was still in its infancy, the number of known folktales and tale collections was comparatively small and accordingly the ways of explanation were rather simple, confining themselves to the scope of the respective country and its cultural past. But gradually tale collections from all parts of the world, from the most remote tribes of Africa, Asia, or America were available and now scholars discovered

with great surprise that there was in many cases a striking similarity between tales separated by enormous geographical distances. It became apparent not only that the general structure of those tales is the same all over the world, but also that they share a great many of details of plot,—what we use to call “motifs”. Such common motifs include for instance that of the three brothers, of whom the youngest seems to be the stupid, but finally wins the King’s daughter against his wicked brothers ; or that of the two children who are persecuted by a witch or ogre, but save themselves by throwing back some small articles, which are turned into mountains, water torrents, fences etc. (the so-called “magic flight”) ; or that of the grateful animal which is saved from death by the hero and as a reward helps him in solving difficult tasks, etc. etc. The collection and classification of such motifs has become a science of its own, on which countless books have already been written ; more and more surprising similarities have been found, the explanation of which is still awaited, and this is by no means astonishing, as the question of the common motifs is closely connected with that of the origin of the folktale which itself is still a mystery.

Two main types of explanations have been proposed as yet, according to what we may call the historical and the psychological school. The historical theory claims that similar stories have a common origin in one place in the world, and that deviations from the alleged archetype are either due to a mixture of various types or to careless tradition in later times. The psychological school says that one and the same tale can originate at different places, the common motifs being the outcome of common psychic attitudes or behaviour which may occur anywhere in the world.

In the present paper the pros and cons of both theories will be reconsidered, and exemplified by a single and rather peculiar motif, that of the seven brothers. This motif by its very nature will lead us to some new ideas concerning the character of fairy tale motifs, which, I hope, can serve as a basis for a new approach to the problem.

But it would be an offence against the genius of the folktale if we started discussion on it in abstract and theoretical terms. So I shall first of all tell some stories of the type in which we are interested here. The German stories are taken from the famous collection of the Grimm brothers, the first edition of which was published exactly

150 years ago. The Indian tales I did not select from Somadeva's *Ocean of Stories*, or the famous Buddhist collection of Birth stories or any other literary source in Sanskrit or Prakrit, but from the unwritten literature of Santals, that well-known non-Aryan tribe of Eastern India. The reason for this was that the stories written in the literary languages, especially those in Sanskrit, are mostly less original than the tribal folklore; they may be more cultivated in language and style, but they are often superseded by later elements and amended according to the more refined taste of a culturally advanced audience. Besides, among tribal folklore the Santal stories, which have been carefully collected by the Norwegian missionary P.O. Bodding, excel in wealth of imagination and the elegant way in which they are narrated. (I am sorry that little of the elegance will be evident in the present essay, as I am going only to summarize the stories and must omit all details which do not belong to the main story.) I shall consider three Indian and three German stories.

The first Indian tale, No. 72 in Bodding's collection, has the title "Jhades Jugi". An old man had seven sons. When he died, his sons left all their work and property and went into the jungle for hunting. They built a house there and lived only on meat. One day a girl watches them from a hiding-place and falls in love with the youngest one. When the seven brothers are absent she cooks seven portions of food for them and leaves them covered before they return home. The brothers refuse to eat this food, but the youngest one eats secretly all the seven portions. The next day again seven portions are found, and the two youngest brothers eat them up. On the third they are eaten by the three youngest brothers. The brothers then one after the other lie in wait to catch the cook, but only the youngest one sees her. She asks him to marry her and promises to procure wives also for his six brothers. Then she departs. The six brothers, returning from their hunt, ask what had happened. The youngest brother tells them: 'She wants to marry me, but not without your consent'. The brothers agree. They build a house for her and another for themselves and acquire again land and cattle. The youngest brother and his wife procure wives also for the six elder brothers. One day, when a child has been born to the wife of the youngest brother, a Yogi named Jhades comes and asks for food. The elder wives bring food, but he does not accept it, for he wants to receive it—as he says—"from her who formerly used to give it

to him". The wives say the youngest wife cannot do so as she has a child, so he wants her tassel and hair-plait. They bring it; he takes it and goes away; the girl, leaving her child, follows the Yogi and does not return anymore. The seven brothers try to catch the Yogi, but he bewitches and turns them into stones. He takes the girl to his country where he is king. When the girl's son grows up, he goes to find his mother. Cow-herds, a jujube tree and a squirrel show him the way the Yogi has gone. He comes to the river, where the stones into which the brothers were turned are lying. When he sits on them to eat they cry and give a sound. He puts some food on them to feed them. Then he goes to the country and becomes a gardener at the court of the Yogi. Together with an old woman he makes garlands for the Queen, his mother. One day he puts a ring at the end of one garland which his mother had given him before she left him. The queen recognizes the ring and goes to see her son. Both decide to kill Jugi Jhades. The mother asks the Yogi where he has his soul. After a number of wrong answers he confesses that it is in two cranes who sit on a cotton tree in the middle of the sea. Mother and son go to the sea. On the way they meet three old women who ask them for a remedy against their evils. The boy crosses the sea on the back of an alligator. He asks the birds for the remedy for the three old women. Then when he kills them the Yogi also dies. On the way back the boy finds again the three old women and tells them what he had learnt from the two birds. Then he disenchant the seven brothers by bathing them and wrapping them up in a towel. All are happy and return to their home.

From this first story let us keep in memory just a few important points ; we have seven brothers and one girl who is married to the youngest one ; the brothers are enchanted and disenchanted ; a ring plays a role as a sign of recognition (or *abhijñāna*) ; the soul of the Yogi is in two birds on the top of a tree. Quite the same motifs reappear, slightly changed only, in a German fairy tale, the well-known story of the "Seven Ravens".

A man had seven sons, but no daughter. But one day a daughter was also born to him. He sent his sons to fetch water to baptize her, but they did not return as they had broken the pitcher. Overcome by anger, the father turned them into ravens with a curse, and they flew away. When the girl was grown up she learnt from her parents about the fate of her brothers and decided to redeem them. She

took leave from her parents, taking with her only a loaf of bread, a pitcher of water, a little chair for sitting on, and a ring as a memento. At first she came to the sun, but the sun was too hot and wanted to eat her up. So she ran away to the moon, but the moon was too cold and also wanted to eat her up. Finally she came to the stars who were very friendly; the morning star gave her a little bone which was the key to the glass mountain. But when the girl came to the glass mountain she had lost the bone; so she cut off a little finger from her hand and used it as a key. The seven brothers were not at home, but a dwarf brought seven portions of food for them. The girl ate a bit of each and drank from each mug, and into the last mug she dropped her ring. When the seven ravens returned they saw that somebody had eaten their food, and the youngest brother found the ring. The girl came out of her hiding place, and the brothers regained their human shape.

This beautiful story is much shorter than the Indian story told before, yet it contains the same motifs: the enchanted seven brothers and a girl, the ring as a sign of recognition; the peculiar relation of the youngest brother towards the girl, the quest for the rescuing of the seven brothers, here done by the girl, not by her son as in the tale before, and the seven portions of food from which secretly a little is eaten.

The Santal story which I shall read now is quite different in character from the first one, but the main motifs are the same. It is No. 85 of Bodding's collection, "How the Sabai Grass Came into Existence" (sabai is a kind of grass which is used for making twines).

Seven brothers had one sister. One day, when she was preparing vegetables for her brothers, she cut her finger, and blood trickled down on the food. When the brothers ate the vegetable, they found it much tastier and wanted to know the reason for it. When they learned that it was their sister's blood they said: Our sister's flesh must be extremely savoury, and decided to kill her. They made her sit on a platform in a maize field to drive away wild animals, and started shooting arrows at her from a hidden place. The youngest brother was not willing to kill her, so he was shooting in another direction. At last the eldest brother killed her. They cut her into pieces and made seven portions of her, but the youngest brother slipped away and brought some crabs as his food; his share of the girl's meat he buried secretly in a white-ant hill. The seven brothers

then became utterly poor. After some time a beautiful bamboo-shoot sprang up from the place where the girl's meat was buried. A man saw it and made a fiddle from it. When he played the fiddle, it sounded like a girl's voice. One day a beautiful girl came out of the fiddle and the man made her one of his family. Meanwhile her brothers were wandering from country to country. One day they met their sister, but did not recognize her. She, however, knew that they were her brothers and invited them for a feast. After the dinner she told them her story and also that she had been saved by the youngest brother. The seven brothers were much ashamed. The eldest brother kicked into the ground and made a hole, and all of them ran into this. The youngest one went down somewhat later than the others, and to pull him back his sister took hold of his hair, but she pulled out his hair, and he also disappeared. She spread his hair on the ground, and it became the sabai grass.

- In this tale the whole atmosphere is different from that of the first two tales, but the main motifs are again the same : the seven brothers and a sister, the peculiar relation of the youngest brother to the sister, whom he saves by burying her meat, and her secret cooking for the brothers. The story is also a good example of how certain motifs remain unchanged but are connected with different figures in different tales : we have here also the seven portions of food, but they are made out of the girl's flesh, not from the meal cooked by her ; we have the tree in the second part of the story, yet it is not the place where the soul of the enemy is hidden as in the first story but the dwelling place of the reborn girl. We note also that the motif of temporary enchantment is here transferred to the sister, whereas in the second story the brothers were enchanted and in the first one both the brothers and sisters. Such variations reveal the true nature of such motifs : we know that they do not represent physical actions, they seem to be only images or pictures ; but they are not even pictures from the beginning, they are thoughts or feelings which create pictures; abstract ideas which assume a quasi-physical appearance in order to be perceptible for human senses. So it was only seemingly that we compared pictures to pictures in the first two stories; we have to compare the ideas which are behind them. This was an anticipation of what will be discussed at the end of this paper; but it was necessary as it will help us to a better understanding of the three stories that follow.

The fourth tale is No. 5 of the Grimm collection: "The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids."

An old goat had seven little kids. When she went out of the house one day, she told them to be careful as the wolf would come in disguise to eat them up; but it would be easy to recognise him by his rough voice and his black paws. Really, after some time the wolf came and said: Open the door, dear children, I am your mother and have brought something for you. But the kids heard that he had a rough voice and did not open. The wolf bought a piece of chalk and ate it, so his voice became smooth. He came again to the kids, but they asked him to show his paw. They saw that it was black and again did not open. Then the wolf besmeared his paw with dough and spread white flour over it. This time the kids believed him and opened the door. When they saw the wolf, all hid in different places, but he found them all and devoured them except the youngest who had been hidden in the clock-case. When the mother returned the youngest kid reported all that had happened. They found the wolf sleeping under a tree and he was snoring so heavily that the branches of the tree were trembling. The mother saw that the wolf's belly was moving, so the six kids must be still alive. They cut the belly open, the little kids came out, and they put stones into the belly and sewed it up. When the wolf woke up, he was very thirsty and went to a well to drink water. But he was so heavy that he fell down into the well and drowned.

This is a short and simple story, and it seems to have lost many of the motifs mentioned in the previous tale. But if we look closer we will see that it still contains more than the seven brothers of whom the youngest one turns out to be the saviour. In the first Santal story the seven brothers were turned into stones. In the present tale also the stones are again found: this time they are not the enchanted brothers themselves, but their substitutes; yet both are only variant imaginings of the same idea. But there is still more: in the first German tale the seven brothers are turned into ravens, and they are turned into other animals (mostly birds) in many other stories of the same type. In the present tale they have their animal shape from the very beginning. So we find that the idea of the inhuman shape is split up into two imagined forms: in the image of the stone filling it represents the rhythm of enchantment and disenchantment, whereas the animal shape as a symbol of the unredeemed creature has become

a permanent feature which gives its stamp to the whole story. We may add that the tree at the end of the story is also found here: the voracious wolf lies under it, much like the wicked Yogi, whose soul is in the two birds sitting on a tree in the sea.

This motif of the tree is found in a much more expressive way in our third Santal story: "When They Tried to Marry a Brother and a Sister" (No. 92 in the collection of Bodding). Seven brothers had one sister. Six of the brothers were married, but the youngest brother and the sister were unmarried. One day the youngest brother planted a flowering plant in his garden and promised to marry the girl who would pick the flower. The flower was taken by his sister. Now their father said he had to marry the two, but the girl ran away into the jungle, carrying a parakeet bird with her. She bathed in a water pool and collected the dirt of her body and made a ball out of it; from the ball a palm tree sprang up. Together with the parakeet she mounted the tree. The tree grew high with her, and she let the parakeet go to bring food for her. A basket-maker, a girl, passed by the tree. The girl on the tree took a winnowing fan from her and gave her a bracelet for it, but told her not to show it to anybody, otherwise she would die. When the basket-maker entered the village of the other girl's family she wrapped up her hand, but her relatives removed the bandage and saw the bracelet. Through promises and threatenings they learnt about the place of hiding of the sister. The relatives one after the other tried to bring her down, but in vain; at last they asked a rain-storm, which bent down the palm tree and she came down half-frozen. By the order of the parents the doors of all the houses in the village had been closed, so she had to go to the room of her brother-bridegroom. While the brother was sleeping she cut her throat with a nail cutter and died. Her brother when he woke and saw it did the same to himself. The blood of both running down did not mix, and the smoke from their funeral piles did not mingle, but went in different directions.

This tragic story, which is much more beautiful if told in the detailed style of the tribal folk, brings the well-known motifs in quite a new combination. By the incest motive the relation of the youngest brother to his sister is stressed more than in any other tale. Of special interest is the tree motif: that the girl drops an ornament from the top of a tree is found in many Western tales of this type, but it is peculiar to the present Santali version that it serves also as

a sign of recognition and thus serves as a connecting link which allows us to identify the necklace of the Western tales with the ring of recognition which had been fixed to the garland in the first Santali tale or dropped into the mug in the German story of the seven ravens. On the other hand the role of the tree was quite different in the Santali story of the wicked Yogi and in the German tale of the seven kids: it was the place of the enemy of the seven brothers or their sisters. For our usual way of thinking it is tempting to ask which is the more original version of both. But from all that has been said before it is evident that this question itself is wrongly put, as in our theory we cannot compare the final results but only the process that leads to them.

Our third German tale and perhaps the finest of all is 'Sneewittchen' or Snow-white, probably the best-known tale of our type. Princess Snow-white was badly oppressed by her stepmother. When her magic mirror revealed to the latter that Snow-white was the most beautiful woman in the world she became utterly jealous of her. She asked a hunter to kill her in the forest and bring her lungs and liver as a proof. But the hunter set her free and brought the Queen the lungs and liver of a young wild boar. Snow-white wandered through the forest and came at last to a little house where she found a table nicely laid for seven persons, and seven beds. Snow-white was very hungry and ate and drank a bit of each portion. Then she wanted to lie down, but no bed would fit her, except the seventh. When it was dark, seven dwarfs who used to dig ore in the mountains came home and noticed that somebody had come to their house. After they had searched for some time they found Snow-white in the bed of the seventh dwarf and did not awaken her. Next morning Snow-white told her story to the dwarfs. She stayed to cook and to keep house for them. The seven dwarfs warned her not to admit anybody to their house, as her stepmother could come in disguise to kill her. In the meantime the stepmother had learned from her magic mirror that Snow-white was still alive. She dressed up as an old shopkeeper woman. Snow-white did not recognise her, and the Queen sold her a beautiful girdle; but she tied it round Snow-white's waist so tightly that she fell down half-dead. The dwarfs, when they returned, cut the belt and called her back to life. Then the stepmother disguised herself again and sold Snow-white a poisoned comb, which she stuck into her skull; Snow-white fell down, but the dwarfs discovered also

the comb. Finally, the Queen brought a basket full of apples and offered one to Snow-white, half of which was poisoned. Snow-white was hesitating, but when the stepmother ate the unpoisoned half of the apple in front of her she believed her and took the poisoned half. This time the dwarfs were unable to revive her. They mourned her for three days. Then they made a coffin of glass on which her name was written in golden letters, laid Snow-white inside it and placed it on the top of a mountain. Snow-white remained in the coffin for a long time, but her body did not decay. One day a prince came into the forest and saw her. He asked the seven dwarfs for Snow-white and they gave her to him. When his servants were carrying away the coffin, they stumbled and as a result of the shaking the poisoned apple came out of Snow-white's throat. She awoke, and the prince married her. The wicked stepmother also came to the wedding, but she was given a pair of glowing iron slippers in which she had to dance until she was dead.

The main motifs have become now quite familiar to us: seven brothers (here exceptionally not brothers), the girl and her peculiar relation to the youngest brother (in whose bed she sleeps), the seven portions of food (of which she eats secretly as in the story of the seven ravens), the enemy who comes in disguise (as the wolf in the story of the seven kids). The tree motif at the end of the story is missing this time; instead, we have a glass coffin on the top of a mountain, which strongly reminds us of the glass mountain in the story of the seven ravens. The six stories told here are only a small part of the great number of similar stories found in Europe as well as in the East. There is hardly one story in which all typical motifs are found, and most of them contain some additional motifs which are confined to only one or a few tales and can, therefore, be neglected in the comparison. But on the whole it can be said that the stories of the seven brothers form a well-defined type which can be easily distinguished, e.g. from the stories with three brothers.

Now having studied a particular group of motifs in German and Indian folktales we may put again the question regarding their origin and ask if their striking similarities are due to migration or to an independent origin. Turning to the migration theory first, it must be stated that it is the only possible explanation in many cases. Especially in certain funny stories of a more intellectual type, the correspondences are sometimes so close that an independent origin

cannot be thought of. But in the stories which are more of the fairy tale proper type, like ours here, it is more difficult to decide. We know that there had been commerce and trade between India and Europe from the earliest times, we know the important role of the Arabic sailors and the Crusaders, and we know that there were countless subterraneous channels through which not only material but also literary goods were exchanged; so the idea that those stories originated in India and then migrated to Europe or the other way round seems at first sight very natural. But there are also some grave objections. The most important one is that we do not find one tale with seven brothers and one sister but dozens even hundreds of different tales both in India and in the West, which all have some motifs in common and some not. Are they all distorted or abridged from the original tale? This is hardly likely, for if we tried to reconstruct this original tale we would come to a monster story which contained everything and nothing; it would be the same if we tried to reconstruct from the musical pieces of a composer, who is distinguished from others by a peculiar style, one original piece which is supposed to have been lost and from which all his known pieces are but distortions or abridgements, instead of resorting to the idea of the composer himself. On the basis of such reflections a second theory was created, the most prominent representative of which is the late Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung. In Jung's opinion not only the motifs of folktales, but also mythology, dreams, works of art are but representations of some basic imaginations which he calls archetypes and which are found in all peoples of the world, as the structure of the human mind is ultimately the same in all peoples. In fact his comparisons are brilliant and convincing in many details, but on the whole they remain unsatisfactory, and the reason is fairly clear. Not in a single line of his numerous and voluminous books do we find the statement that those archetypal images reflect a *reality*. As there is no perception in the world without an object perceived, we must, therefore, assume that in the view of Jung those images result from a common defect in the human mind rather from a common ability. Another fact must also rouse our doubts about the validity of Jung's methods, namely that his examples drawn from modern life come almost entirely from the sphere of abnormal mental states, from insane asylums and neurotic establishments, which differ strangely from the sound and vigorous atmosphere of true

folktales. But must hallucinations—if we designate by this term a sensual perception without physical object—be the outcome of only worn-out, abnormal states of mind? Is a man who claims to see things which others cannot see necessarily a maniac? A simple consideration will convince us that this is not so. It is known to all of us that different objects or their images rouse different sensations in our mind: a spray of white and tender flowers makes us feel happy, but a dark thunder-cloud has a terrifying effect; and we can say that there is only one sensation coming from one image: it is a kind of language in which no ambiguous terms are tolerated. How then if there were people who do the reverse, i.e. who can intensify their own sensations to such a degree that the corresponding image appears before their eyes? Of course in our modern times in which people have become so entangled in the fetters of the physical world, it would be difficult to find a man of this kind, but in the old times when folktales, genuine folktales, were made, it might have been the normal mental state of mankind. In modern times when science and philosophy work jointly to persuade us that human psychic life is nothing but a mechanism, which registers stimuluses of the external world and reacts to them, we have completely forgotten that this internal life has an independent value of its own; we talk much about spirit and spirituality, but we know little about it. This is clearly shown by the fact that in the case of the external, physical world everything is supposed to be regulated by rigid laws, a questioning of which is considered a heinous intellectual crime, whereas the non-physical world—if it is not denied at all—is looked upon as something which is chaotic, lawless, nebulous and in which all contrasts and differences disappear. Now it is quite clear that the mere acknowledgment of a non-physical world does not lead us far beyond the teachings of Professor Jung, nor does it help us to a real understanding of folktales. A real insight into the structure of the internal spiritual world is required. But how can this be done? It is true that we have lost the childish and naive mentality of our early ancestors to whom the world of fairy tales was part of their everyday environment; but on the other hand it would be wrong to believe that we need only apply our usual method of natural science instead. Natural science pertains only to the external world, towards which man is a spectator, but if we want to explore the results of human mental activities, we cannot remain mere spectators. So only a conscious and controlled

activation of our own thoughts and feelings will enable us to understand the process which led to the making of those old tales. Human thought in our normal experience seems to be only the subject of the act of recognition, but it can be also made the object of recognition. When this is done in due intensity then we are inevitably led to a symbolic language which is as far from dry and abstract allegories as it is from delirious, merely pathological fancies and dreams. And it must be clear from all what has been said now that the discoveries of this method have a dignity of their own, which cannot be described in the terms of the images they produce; they must be a new, quite unprecedented experience. And it must also seem quite natural that from the present paper an "explanation" of the motifs was not to be expected; its purpose was to show with the help of a typical example that the comparison of those images itself leads to a non-imaginative source behind them.

There might be raised the objection that such an introspective approach as has been proposed in this paper is not compatible with objective, or, as it is mostly called, "true" science. But if the investigation of truth is the only real purpose of true science and the method is only a means to this goal, then we are at any time entitled to extend this method, whenever it seems to be advisable or necessary.

THE OLD-GERMAN HILDEBRANDLIED AND THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

(Europe and Asia in the Heroic Age. Some Aspects of a Comparison)

The Hildebrandlied is the song of Hildebrand and Hadubrand, the song of the combat between father and son. It was written down by two monks in the monastery of Fulda between 810 and 820 A.D. At that time Fulda was a free monastery, responsible towards the emperor only. The monastery had been founded by Bonifatius in the year 744; this means it had been founded in a Germania whose inhabitants were heathens. At that time the so-called civilized or cultured world consisted of those countries that enclosed Rome in the Mediterranean area. From this centre a cultural radiation originated, which soon reached the underdeveloped countries of northern Europe. The bearers of this spreading culture were the missionaries, who founded monasteries as the centres of their activity. In the Germany of the time around 800 A.D., which was the epoch of Charlemagne's reign, the Fulda monastery represented a kind of university for the Eastern area of the empire. In the circle of Charlemagne not only was the traditional Latin education cultivated, but the indigenous cultural heritage was also preserved in manuscripts. If it had not been for those manuscripts early German literature would have been buried by the wave of Christianization.

We do not know, however, what was the immediate occasion for the two monks to write down the *Hildebrandlied*. The manuscript is written in the so-called Carolean Minuscule, which had been the general newly introduced script of the time. There are some single characters of the Anglo-Saxon Insular Script, which might have been handed down from the Anglo-Saxon founder of the monastery. An examination of the *Hildebrandlied* by a literary historiographer shows that many parts had been translated into Low German

language. The original text must have been written in Bavarian-Longobardian language. And the general assumption of modern literary history is that the *Hildebrandlied* was composed among the Longobards of Upper Italy in the 6th century A.D. This means the *Hildebrandlied* is a product of the declining period of the time of migrations, which started with the collapse of the Roman empire and continued to the foundation of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. During the period of the big migrations it was especially the Germanic tribes who were on the move and tried to feed on the bankrupt assets of the Roman Empire. The society of the migrating tribes was probably something intermediate between a family-group and a small king's people. Soon the caste of the warrior-gentry takes shape within this group. And this caste of warrior-gentry is based on a special ethos, a special code of morals or code of honour, which we meet in the *Hildebrandlied* and also in the *Bhagavad-Gitā*.

But first let the poem speak for itself:

Ik gihorta dhat seggen
dhat sih urhettun ænon muotin
Hiltibrant enti Hadhubrant untar heriun tuem,
sunafatarungo iro saro rihtun
garutun se iro gudhhamun gurtun sih iro suert ana
helidos ubar (h) ringa do sie to dero hiltiu ritun.
Hiltibrant gimahalta Heribrantes sunu her uuas heroro man
ferahes frotoro her fragen gistuont
fohem uuortum uuer sin fater uuari
firco in folche eddo uuelihhes cnuosles du sis
ibu du mi einan sages ik mi de odre uuert
chind in chunincriche chud ist mir al irmindeot.
Hadhubrant gimahalta Hiltibrantes sunu:
dat sagetun mi usere liuti
alte anti frote dea erhina uuarun,
dat Hiltibrant hætti min fater ih heittu Hadhubrant
forn her ostar gihueit floh her Otachres nid
hina miti Theotrihhe enti sinero degano filu,
her furlaet in lante luttilla sitten
prut in bure barn unuuahsan
arbo laosa — her reit ostar hina;
sid Detrihhe darba gistuontum
fateres mines dat uuas so friuntlaos man
her uuas Otachre ummet irri

degano dechisto unti Deotrichhe;
 her uuas eo folches at ente imo uuas eo fehta ti leop
 chund uuas her chonnem mannum
 ni uuaniu ih iu lib habbe.
 wettu iriningot quad Hiltibrant obana ab heuane
 dat du neo dana halt mit sus sippan man dinc ni gileitos;
 uuant her do ar arme uuuntane bauga
 cheisuringa gitan so imo se der chuning gap
 huneo truhtin — dat ih dir it nu bi huldi gibu.
 Hadhubrant gimahalta Hiltibrantes sunu:
 mit geru scal man geba infahan
 ort uuidar orte,
 du bist dir alter hun ummet spaher
 spenis mih mit dinem uuortun uili mih dinu speru uuerpan,
 pist also gialtet man so du ewin inwit fortos;
 dat sagetun mi seolidante
 uuestar ubar uuentil seo dat in wic furnam
 tot ist Hiltibrant Heribrantes sunu.
 Hiltibrant gimahalta Heribrantes sunu:
 uuela gisihi ih in dinem hrustim
 dat du habes heme herron goten
 dhat du noh bi disemo riche reccheo niuuurti,
 uuelaga nu uualtant got quad Hiltibrant uueuuurt skihit,
 ih uallota sumaro enti uuintro sehstic ur lante
 dar man mih eo scerita in folc sceotantero
 so man mir at burc enigeru banun ni gifasta
 nu scal mih suasat chind suertu hauuan
 breton mit sunu billiu eddo ih imo ti banin uuerdan;
 dhoh maht du nu aodlihho ibu dir din ellen taoc
 in sus heremo man hrusti giuinnan
 rauba bihrahanen ibu du dar enic reht habes,
 [Hadhubrant gimahalta Hiltibrantes sunu:
 arga.....]
 Hiltibrant gimahalta Heribrantes sunu:
 der si doh nu argosto ostarliuti
 der dir nu uuiges uuarne nu dih es so uuel lustit,
 gudea gimeinum niuse de motti
 uuerdarsih dero hiutu hregilo hrumen muotti
 erdo desero brunnono bedero uualtan.
 dho lettun se ærist asckim scritan
 scarpen scurim dat in dem sciltim stont.
 do stoptun tosamane staimbort chlodun
 heuuun harmlicco huitte scilti
 unti im iro lintun luttilo uuurtun
 giuuigan miti uuabnun.....¹

Hildebrand spoke, Heribrand's son:

I can see from your battledress
that you have a good lord at home
that you in this splendour not yet have become an expelled warrior;
Alas, ruling god, now grievous fate has to be fulfilled;
I have lived out of the country for 60 summers and winters

(30 years)

and people have always counted me among the fighting men
and death has not reached me before any castle.

Now shall the beloved child cut me with the sword,
stretch me to the ground with his sword, or I shall become his

murderer.

But you may easily now, if your strength are sufficient,
win the armour from such an old man,
take the garment (as a booty), if you have any right (if you win)
[Hadubrand: "Coward"]

Hildebrand spoke, Heribrand's son:

He would be the meanest coward among the people of the east,
who now refused the fight, when you are so eager for it.

He may profit of the combat, who is able to,
who today can pride himself on the two armours
and possess these two battle-dresses.

There they first threw their lances
in a heavy shower that they stood in the shields,
then they stepped against each other splitting the coloured boards
forcefully they cut the white shields,
until their linden-woods had become small,
shattered by the weapons...

Here the manuscript breaks off. The end is missing, we are not
sure about the result of the combat. The general assumption is that
a few verses in the Edda² tell us about the end of the Hildebrand.
These are the verses:

Stendr mér at hqfdhi hlif in brotna;
ero par taldhir tigr ins átta
manna peira, er ec at mordhi vardh.

Liggr par inn svási sonr at hqfdhi,
eptirerfingi, er ec eiga gat;
ôviliandi aldrs syniadhag.

At my head stands the broken shield;
80 are depicted here
all fighters I have killed.

There lies at my head the beloved son,
 the heir I got,
 against my will I became his murderer.

We observe the artistic structure and the fine work of the song of Hildebrand and Hadubrand. The poem is written in alliterative verses. This convention required that the main word or sometimes the two main words of a half-line begin with the same consonant as the main word of the second half-line. In place of the respective consonants there might be vowels; all the vowels alliterate with each other, e.g.,

breton mit sinu billiu eddo ih imo ti banin werdan.

or : *dat sih urhættun ænon muotin*

The leading words are pronounced dynamically. This is completely different from the smoothness of classical Greek verse.

The situation is pitched to utter tension. Two armies are confronted. One is the army of the expelled king Theoderich, and its leader is the king's faithful armourer Hildebrand. The other army belongs obviously to Odoaker, a Germanic usurper on the Roman Empire's throne; its leader is the young Hadubrand. The two leaders meet in the middle between the two armies for single combat, which often decided the fate of the armies. The combat is unavoidable. But this is not yet the climax of the tension. They, who are opposed to each other and have to fight each other, are relatives. This situation is almost identic with the situation of Arjuna before the didactic speech of Krishna. Hildebrand asks his adversary's name, who calls himself Hadubrand. The father recognises his son, but the son does not recognise his father. Hadubrand is convinced that his father is dead, and he praises the memory of his father. Hildebrand wants to reveal himself as a near relative of his opponent in his exclamation: "*dat du dana halt mit sus sippan man dinc ni gileitos*" (you never may be engaged in controversy with so near a relative). But all the time Hildebrand knows that the combat is inevitable. He offers presents to his son, in order to win him, but Hadubrand refuses the presents, because he suspects a deceitful trick. The old Germanic hero was suspicious of nothing more than presents. And to the young Hadubrand the offering of presents only appears a gesture of cunning cowardice, of which he accuses the old warrior. With this the severest

possible offence had been spoken: coward—arga (full of deceit). The combat begins. First they fight with spears, then with swords, until their shields split.

When Hildebrand later comes to die, he bewails his fate, which had compelled him to be the murderer of his own son. The moral law of the time, which was based on the integrity of man, postulated that even one's own son had to be killed, if the good name and the fame of a warrior were threatened. For this law the Germanic warrior had to give everything. Great was the man, who could not be touched by anybody.

^The *Bhagavad-Gitā*³ is part of the *Mahābhārata*.⁴ Here it is not necessary to give more than a few hints regarding the story of the *Mahābhārata*. The battle of Kurukshetra is about to begin. The Pandavas, among them Arjuna, banished and cheated out of their rights, are confronted with Duryodhana, their relative and the cause of their expulsion. Lord Krishna, king of Dwaraka, has volunteered to act as Arjuna's charioteer. Krishna is an incarnation of the highest deity Vishnu, or better: of the deity as such, who thus has placed himself among the party of the expelled, but without, however, taking an active part in the battle. The men, who had been cheated out of their rights, have the support of the deity, but they have to fight for their rights themselves. Arjuna meets with the same severe decision Hildebrand had encountered. They are both leaders of armies that are confronted as enemies. Both of them recognize among the enemy army near relatives and friends. The brave Arjuna shrinks from attacking his teacher, the son of the Ganges, Bhishma, or his teacher-in-arms Dronacharya; he would rather resign his rights. The price of the murder of relatives and friends seems to him too high. It is a fine gesture, when before the battle Yudhishthira gets down from his war-chariot and walks over to the enemy army, in order to get from his old teacher Bhishma, who is the leader of the enemy army, the permission to begin the battle. Arjuna, however, even throws his bow away and seemingly wants to leave the battle-field. There Krishna encourages him and in a long speech teaches him about the order of the world.)

The main difference between Hildebrand and Arjuna is the following: Hildebrand, acting according to the rules of the moral law of his world, has to kill his own son and is afterwards all through his life

loaded with the fame *and* the guilt of this deed, whereas Arjuna is a priori freed from all human responsibility by the god's reference to his duty and to the general transitoriness of things and bodies. Moreover, it happens often in the *Mahābhārata* that Krishna is rebuked, especially by his brother Balarama, for tolerating unfair and unvaliant attitudes in battle and even supporting them. Krishna, however, does not feel himself responsible; as a god he is beyond good and evil, he does not take an active part, he only tolerates. With his toleration, however, he covers and excuses the respective outrageous hero. What the two heroic stories have in common is the depiction of the duty of the knight, who belongs to the warrior-class—that duty, which postulates combat even against one's own flesh and blood, in order to preserve the general moral world order.

There arises the question, whether it is an axiom of Western thinking that man has not only to take upon himself the consequences of his earthly deeds but that his whole life seems to be directed towards these consequences. The Romans put it like this: *Quidquid agis, respice finem* (Whatever you do, think of the consequences.). Krishna, however, lectures: "That is how a man reaches the ultimate Truth; by working without anxiety about results." Whereas the action of the oriental man is accomplished under the aspect of transcendency, being directed beyond this world with its system of rebirth, and not towards an earthly goal, the occidental man lives and acts in and for this world. For the western man it is important that he lives a long and active life and acquires fame in this world for an eternal earthly life. Like a god he wants to press his mark on the world, and if his strength is not sufficient for this, he wants at least to be remembered. For this you can find many proofs in Germanic literature.⁵

Of course, the warriors' heaven, into which the deserving heroes are received to live together with the highest deity, exists also in the Germanic world. And there are signs of earthly thinking also in the Indian epic; think of Arjuna's question "If we kill them, our sin is greater?" Both the attitudes—transcendence and immanence—are discussed in both cultures, i.e. East and West, but they are valued differently and stressed differently. If Arjuna is only the executor and earthly finisher of the course of the world that has already been predestined by Vishnu-Krishna, a similar motif is suggested with the "wewurt skihit" of the *Hildebrandlied*.

The Hildebrandlied is a poem which tells of events, a ballad, which is recited before an audience by a bard, who had heard of the events. The motif of the challenging dialogue between the two combatants is also very often found in the *Mahābhārata*. In the *Hildebrandlied* the dialogue of challenge is applied as an artistic feature of the balladesque narration. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* is a didactic poem, and the narrator Sanjaya reports it in the form of a dialogue between God and man; a form which is typical for this type of poetry. In this dialogue between God and man the revealing primeval talk is recapitulated too. There are examples of this type of poetry also in Germanic literature.⁶

There are, of course, very many resemblances between the motifs of the *Mahābhārata* and the German heroic epic. We should remember that both these works of literature were created by Indo-Germanic peoples, who probably had in common a sun cult with Vedic-Brahmanic cult-texts. And we find in the West as well as in the East the rising warrior class with its establishment of the caste-system as a principle of social order. The former Shamans and the Brahmans are joined by the Kschatryas, the knights, the warriors, who take upon themselves the government of this world. The combat of father and son is only a side-episode in the *Mahābhārata* (Arjuna and his son) without tragic end, but we find the motif in Persian literature, where Rustam and Sohrab fight with each other for three days, and you find it also in Russian literature, where the old hero Ilja kills his son Sokolnik.

¹ Das Hildebrandlied, eine geschichtliche Einleitung für Laien, mit Lichtbildern der Handschrift, alt-und neuhochdeutschen Texten. Herausgegeben von Georg Baesecke, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Halle 1945.

² Edda. Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern. Herausgegeben von Gustav Neckel, I. Text. Dritte, umgearbeitete Auflage von Hans Kuhn. Heidelberg 1962, Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag. p. 314.

³ *The Song of God, Bhagavad-Gītā*, Translated by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, Mentor-Book, 1956.

⁴ *Mahābhārata* by C. Rajagopalachari, 1958, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty, Bombay.

⁵ f.i.:

Deyr fé, deyia frændr, .
deyr siálfr it sama;
ec veit einn, at aldri deyr:
dómr um dauðan hvern. (Hávamál, Edda p. 29)

The cattle die, the friends,
at last you die yourself;
I know one thing that never dies:
the memory of your deeds.

⁶ f.i. Edda p. 34 (Loddfáfnismál).

THE UPANISADS, PATANJALI, APPARITIONS, AND W. B. YEATS :
(A New Approach to *A Vision*)

AFTER 1914 Yeats apparently had no association with Indians until 1931 when he met an Indian religious teacher called Shri Purohit Swami. His biographer Joseph Hone has suggested that the Swami awakened his "old sentiment of Hinduism,"¹ dormant since childhood. But the fact is that he pursued his study of Indian systems, such as Yoga and Tantra, into middle age and that his association with Tagore kept this interest fresh in his mind. He made good use of this study in his writing, particularly in *A Vision*. His enthusiasm for Tagore may have waned somewhat after 1914, but not his interest in India. And this interest, let me emphasize again, was not religious but philosophical in the sense that *A Vision* is a philosophy. Hindu thought recognizes this distinction by the word *Darśana*². *Darśana* is not a system of philosophy in the western sense, but nonetheless is a system of coherent affirmations, co-extensive with human experience which it wants to interpret in its entirety. It is possible that by calling his "philosophy" a "vision" Yeats was thus indicating its similarity with the Indian conception of philosophy which is based more on intuition than on reason.

If Yeats's interest had been spasmodic, or only an expression of his exotic taste, it would have been a gross exaggeration on his part to declare in 1937 that all his life he had "fed upon" the Upaniṣads.³ *A Vision* is full of references to India⁴ and some of them were made before he met Shri Purohit Swami.⁵ Moreover if they were not in some way connected with his poetic phantasmagoria he would not have written five important essays⁶ on the Yogic system and the Upaniṣads, during the last busy years of his life, between 1932 and 1938. His health was gradually deteriorating after 1927,

but his creative power was at its height. Even then he wrote those essays, not certainly to humour a Swami, but to clarify his own position in relation to India, a position he had reached through years of close association. And it is because of this continued association that in his last general introduction (1937) for a contemplated complete edition of his works, he refers at length to India and her traditional ideas.⁷

After he came to know Tagore, he became more and more critical, as I have suggested elsewhere, of the religious ideas of modern India, and began to emphasize his appreciation for her unmodified traditional systems represented by Yoga and Tantra. He also read the Upaniṣads in the light of Yoga. He complained metaphorically that modern Indians had taken to wearing trousers,⁸ a fact he considered indicative of their neglect of tradition. For the trend of their rational thinking, which he regretted, he blamed the introduction of English education in India, and was sorry that Indians had been "forced to learn everything, even their own Sanskrit, through the vehicle of English till the first discoverer of wisdom had become bywords [*sic*] for vague abstract facility."⁹ He was obviously referring to the modern tendency to emphasize the abstract thinking of Vedānta and the Upaniṣads, and to neglect the mythological part of Hinduism. It was mainly from India that he "snatched the clue to the interpretation of the Druidic culture,"¹⁰ and in his attitude to the ancient Indian systems he was a greater traditionalist than even a modern Hindu like Tagore.

I

From the way Tagore, or even George Russell, interpreted the Upaniṣads, Yeats could get no support for the conception of super-human powers that Madame Blavatsky claimed for the Indian Mahātmās; nor was any explanation of the spiritualistic phenomena available. His early interest in spiritualism was discouraged by Madame Blavatsky.¹¹ After 1911, however, he began again to collect material regarding spiritualism for writing notes to Lady Gregory's *Visions and Beliefs*. He visited séance rooms in the poor districts of London, read in Fenollosa's translation the traditional *Noh* dramas of Japan, that were full of ghosts and god-dances. Then shortly after his marriage in 1917, he discovered that his wife was capable

of automatic writing. Like Madame Blavatsky, who was supposed to have been helped in writing her books by her invisible Mahātmās, Yeats also received, through Mrs. Yeats's automatic writing, dictations from invisible instructors. For years he worked on these notes and in 1925 brought out, with fanciful trappings, the first edition of *A Vision*, the book of his personal philosophy, for private circulation. His object was to find a system of thought that would leave his imagination free to create, and "yet make all that it created or could create part of the one history, and that the soul's."¹² Many of the ideas of *A Vision* were taken from Indian sources. Some of them were even deduced from the Upaniṣads, though Tagore never talked about them. And these ideas, expressed in powerful geometrical symbols, are in the background of his work.

Most of these ideas are not new in Yeats. He had said them all before, in one way or another, as Ellmann has pointed out.¹³ The symbols may be different, but "the thematic basis is much the same as the one he developed in his youth. There are cycles, the re-incarnating souls, the possible escape from the wheel of time to a timeless state, the millennial reversal of civilizations that corresponds to the rebirth of individuals, the heroic unconventional ethic, the unknown and problematic god, the battle between the spiritual and material worlds. All these are taken up and reworked." What has not been noted so far is that the general scheme of *A Vision* has some interesting resemblances to that of Patañjali's Yogic system.

Yeats begins *A Vision* with a classification of human personalities, and he analyzes the human psyche into two opposing pairs of *Faculties* which explain "what man has made."¹⁴ Corresponding to these Faculties he posits four *Principles* for explaining "what makes man."¹⁵ These terms, Faculties and Principles, would be familiar to those who have read Madame Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*.¹⁶ They are known as the *tattvas* or "principles of creation," which all the aspirants of the Theosophical Society had to learn. Even before the end of the century Yeats had included these *tattvas* in a proposed ritual for his Mystical Order. So he was already acquainted with this conception. The difference between the Faculties and Principles in *The Secret Doctrine* and in *A Vision* is that Madame Blavatsky had divided them into seven, whereas in Yeats they are four in number. Ellmann points out that these Four Faculties are, "a variation of a familiar quarternary, which appears in the four humours

of medieval medicine and psychology, in the Four Zoas of Blake,"¹⁷ and elsewhere. They also seem to be a variation of the Faculties of Patañjali which Yeats read in authentic text in *The Yoga System of Patañjali*, published with commentaries in 1914 from Harvard University.

The Faculties, in *A Vision*, are: *Will* and *Mask*, *Body of Fate* and *Creative Mind*. *Will* is defined¹⁸ in *A Vision* (1925) as "the first matter" of the personality; *Mask* is "the image of what we wish to become"; *Creative Mind* is "intellect, as intellect was understood before the close of the seventeenth century—all the mind that is consciously constructive"; and *Body of Fate* is "the physical and mental environment, the changing human body, the stream of Phenomena as this affects a particular individual, all that is forced upon us from without, Time as it affects sensation." These Four Faculties are responsible for "what man has made." This, indeed, is a very unusual psychological analysis. Patañjali also begins his system by analyzing the human psyche into four Faculties: the Discursive mind (*Mānas*), the Discriminative mind (*Buddhi*), the Mind-Material (*Chitta*), and Personality (*Ahaṁkāra*).¹⁹ Corresponding to the Four Faculties, Yeats has Four Principles, which are *Husk*, *Passionate Body*, *Spirit* and *Celestial Body*. The Yoga system and certain Upaniṣads²⁰ have: the Bodily Self (*Vaiśvānara*), the Vital Self (*Taijasa*), the Intellectual Self (*Prāñña*) and the Intuitive Self (*Turiya*).

We can compare the outline of the two schemes briefly. Yeats's *Body of Fate* could be *Chitta*, which, as Yeats points out, "most separates Indian from European thought."²¹ Mind, in the Yogic analysis, is matter, and has *Chitta* as the subtle matter which assumes the shape of anything presented to it by the senses.²² This *Chitta* carries the impression or "memory" of objects and associated feelings and thoughts, as *Samskāra*, even after the dissolution of the human body, and becomes the basis and vehicle of the reincarnated personality. A man's life, according to this analysis, begins with *Samskāra*, the vestiges of past lives, and therefore it is something that is given. In Yeats, *Body of Fate* also is inactive, and primary in nature. *Buddhi*, which has the quality of *Sattva* or purity, and so is inactive, resembles Yeats's *Creative Mind*. *Will* may be likened to *Mānas*, which is active; it functions with the help of five active

and five passive senses.²³ And *Mask* can be compared to *Ahaṃkāra*, the "I"-ness or personality.

These psychological terms never occur in Yeats's poetry. The question is, why was he so concerned with this psychology? A brief discussion of the Yoga system can be helpful to answer this question.

According to Patañjali there are four states of the soul: the waking state, the dreaming state, the state of dreamless sleep, and the "fourth" state or *turiya*.²⁴ With gradual exhaustion of desire, and with proper meditation one can, by stages, reach the corresponding states of Reality, which are called *Virāt* (cosmos), *Hiraṇyagarbha* (the soul of the world), *Īśvara* (self-consciousness), and *Brahman* (joy eternal). This Yogic analysis has been called an explanation of the micro-macrocosm "in terms of proto-psychological functionalism."²⁵ What was a mythical image of the rise of a universe out of the cosmic waters and cosmic egg is reinterpreted in Patañjali in terms of stages of human consciousness. "From the primal state of self-absorption, or involution," Zimmer explains Patañjali, "which amounts practically to quiescence and resembles non-being, a state of intuitive inner awareness (*Buddhi*) is evolved; this is antecedent to the notion of 'I' (*Ahaṃkāra*), which is the following transformation; and through intellect (*Mānas*) consciousness then proceeds to an experience of (and to action upon) the outer world through exterior senses."²⁶ The cosmic process is thus understood, in terms of psychological experience, as the unfolding from an innermost, all-perceiving centre. From the quiescent state of inward absorption the whole world is thought to unfold.

Here Yeats could find a "philosophical" support of the world of spirits. In the state of reality corresponding to the dreaming state of the soul the unpurged images of the separated spirits float about. Patañjali systematizes the universe and the human psyche in a way that can explain, on one level, the common belief in apparitions and reincarnation. On another level, these beliefs could be equated to mere dreams of the human soul, a position that could be utilized by a metropolitan poet.

This explanation of the world of spirits on two levels was necessary for Yeats. He was enraged with those who made jokes about the country visions, but one cannot be sure that he himself believed in them. He "let his imagination become freely peopled with daemons, fairies, discarnate spirits, wizards, or Rosicrucians in cowls or

shrouds."²⁷ But at the same time one cannot but feel that there is method in his madness. He was making some well planned propaganda on behalf of the "unwritten tradition." With an almost malicious humour he seemingly innocently turned the conversation to ghosts, apparitions, and magic, particularly when sceptics like Bertrand Russell were in the company.²⁸ Considering that he himself remained sporadically sceptical all his life, one feels that the integration of the world of spirits in a poetic scheme was a kind of challenge to him. He clearly states in *A Vision* that phantoms are not real in the sense that the visible world is real. "I am convinced that this ancient generalisation," he writes, "in so far as it saw an analogy between a 'separated spirit,' or phantom and a dream of the night, once was a universal belief, for I find it, or some practice founded upon it, everywhere."²⁹ This dream of the spirit world has, he suggests, a positive contribution to make. It makes people who believe in it, kind, courteous, and generous,³⁰ the qualities he praised as belonging to a heroic society.

A faith in the world of separated spirits or of something that remains after death became Yeats's measure of other writers. He felt the spirit world to be necessary to emphasize the importance of desire for life. Even if the afterlife is a delusion, one must believe that death is not the end of everything, that all things only seem to pass,³¹ and that something still remains. Perhaps this is an irrational desire of the human heart, but to disregard that greatest of human desires is not generous. Yeats judges Paul Valéry's famous poem *Cimetière Marin* from this point of view. While admitting that the poem moves him profoundly, he dismisses it from among his "sacred books" because Valéry rejoices that human life must pass.³² He then introduces in his comment on Valéry's poem his image of common human desire. He remembers a beautiful young girl singing at the edge of the sea in Normandy.³³ "She thought herself alone, stood barefooted between sea and sand; sang with lifted head of the civilisations that there had come and gone, ending every verse with the cry: 'O Lord, let something remain'." Yeats comments that every age must have metropolitan poets as well as singing girls, but to stun the singing girl with the wisdom that nothing remains would be too cruel.

He had chosen Patañjali instead of the Upaniṣads, because Patañjali, like Yeats's *A Vision*, explains the basis of the idea of

reincarnation, of the world of spirits. Moreover, in both the systems it is not regarded as practical to try to ignore human passions and emotions. This generous understanding of the human heart is absent in the Upaniṣads. A novice Indian ascetic, on the other hand, if he follows the Yogic system, admits that sometimes he "is tortured by his passion" as a result of his disregard of normal life, and even will "pray to the God to come to him as a woman and have with him sexual intercourse."³⁴ Yeats, with his basically sceptical mind, does not explain this prayer and its fulfilment as a subjective affair at all, "for in the morning his pillow will be saturated with temple incense, his breast yellow with the saffron dust of some temple offering."³⁵ Sometimes the God may select, Yeats adds with characteristic humour, some living symbol of himself, a wandering priest, perhaps, for an ascetic woman, and a wandering priestess, if the ascetic is a man. Yeats compares this "Asiatic courtesy" with Christian Europe's moral indignation that arises from the conviction that "the soul has but one life to find or lose salvation in."³⁶ As there are many lives, there seems to be no hurry for salvation. "There are Indian Courtesans," he mentions with approbation, "that meditate many hours a day awaiting without sense of sin their moment, perhaps many lives hence, to leave man for God. For the present they are efficient courtesans. . . . Kings, princes, beggars, soldiers, courtesans and the fools by the wayside are equal to the eye of sanctity, for everybody's road is different, everybody awaits his moment."³⁷ In the Upaniṣads, as expounded by Tagore, Yeats found the same moral indignation as in Christianity.

Even though Yeats preferred Patañjali to the abstractions of the Upaniṣads, he was not prepared to go all the way with that ancient saint. Patañjali puts his emphasis on the realization of the highest self, though he accepts human limitations. Yeats uses Patañjali's analysis for judging man and history, as perhaps he once derived from it support for his philosophy of the Mask. This he could easily do as the Yoga system is basically a discipline and as such could be adapted for any purpose.³⁸ He preferred Patañjali because at a crucial point in the development of human understanding Patañjali devised a way out of the approaching "intellectual anarchy."³⁹ In Greece, Yeats points out, the similar "intellectual anarchy" of the sophists put an end to the Golden Age, and the age of the sophists led to Socrates, whose ruthless analysis refused to

understand with sympathy popular beliefs and practices. In India, on the other hand, the early trance of the Vedic period was not simply replaced by the intellectual sophistry of the Upaniṣadic sages like Yājñavalkya,⁴⁰ "into whose mouth are put profound thoughts, litanies, variations upon a theme,"⁴¹ and who had substituted the eternal Self for all the mythological gods. There were two distinct developments of thought at that point of Indian history. Buddha led to the intellectual dissolution of the world, to renunciation and asceticism. Patañjali, on the other hand, unlike Buddha, "sought truth not by the logic or the moral precepts that draw the crowd, but by methods of meditation and contemplation that purify the soul."⁴²

The system that he devised was not abstract philosophy. By following that system the devotee, "through states analogous to self-induced hypnotic sleep,"⁴³ attains a final state of "complete wakefulness," which is called *śamādhi* or *turiya*, "where the soul, purified of all that is not itself, comes into possession of its own timelessness."⁴⁴ Universal Self or *Brahman* is the highest reality, but it is admitted that one should by stages exhaust desire before craving the ultimate release. Yeats could very well adapt the system for his purpose. The only difference is that he put an emphasis on the nature of human civilization. A profound reliance on the self is essential as much for the ultimate union with the Universal Self as for creating a heroic order where a man should be most himself. Patañjali's practical analysis therefore attracted Yeats.

As a result of his preference for Patañjali, the Upaniṣads also yielded to him ideas that were quite dissimilar to those of Tagore, who was not interested in Yoga. While Tagore, in *Sādhanā*, had derived from the Upaniṣads contempt for human civilizations,⁴⁵ Yeats received from the same source actual support for his conception of a heroic order. In *A Vision* he thus points out that in ancient India he had found "the first distinction between *primary* and *antithetical* civilizations"⁴⁶ in the Dark Fortnight and Bright Fortnight of Brāhmanism. The images occur in the *Bṛihadāranyaka* Upaniṣad.⁴⁷ Yeats makes a magnificently new use of the idea. The images not only suggested to him *primary* and *antithetical* civilizations. He also used them as symbols of subjective and objective temperaments among human beings. According to the Upaniṣads, one who lives in the Bright Fortnight, from the new to the full moon,

becomes fire or an eater.⁴⁸ Yeats characterized Balzac, who wrote that "Blessed are the imperfect, for theirs is the Kingdom of Love,"⁴⁹ as "that great eater." This was because when he was contemplating going to Japan, China, or India for his philosophy, the writings of Balzac had brought him back, reminded him of his preoccupation with national, social, personal problems, and convinced him that he could not escape the human comedy as it is.⁵⁰ The great eater is a man of subjective temperament for whom the self is the sole source of highest truth. He fulfils the possibilities hidden in himself, moves toward the full moon, and may, if wise, "go to the Gods (expressed or symbolized in the senses) and share their long lives." He can even pass out of all life if he chooses, if he can assert that he is Brahma himself.⁵¹ On the other hand, there are men of objective temperament, who move toward the dark of the moon, and seek deliverance from a God who is different from one's own self. Yeats summarizes the Upaniṣadic point of view and says that these men, "if they are pious, as the crowd is pious, if they can offer the right sacrifices, pray at the right temples, can go to the blessed ghost, to the Heaven of their fathers, find what peace can be found between death and birth." But deliverance is not for them. They cannot escape from rebirth, and must come back.

Whether Yeats "believed" in these Upaniṣadic ideas is not relevant. What is important is the way he utilized them in poetry for expressing his judgment of man and civilization. He did not appreciate, for example, Maud Gonne's conversion to Catholicism that brought to her life an element of moral indignation, and added to her bitterness as an Irish nationalist. In the poem "Broken Dreams,"⁵² written in 1915, Yeats thus expressed his displeasure with the ideals that Maud Gonne pursued. He deplored the fact that she hardly cared for beauty, though her solicitude for the poor, or even an old gaffer was limitless. This is a Christian virtue, and a modern Hindu one. But since she did not care for the fulfilment of her self, the poet is "afraid" that she would not have the deliverance that she sought. He visualizes the condition of her soul after death, and says that it would perhaps run and

paddle to the wrist
In that mysterious, always brimming lake
Where those that have obeyed the holy law
Paddle and are perfect.

This is the familiar Indian image of the swan as the soul. The use of the words "afraid," "paddle," "obeyed the holy law," clearly suggests that the poet is not describing a blessed condition. The poem, which is called a "rambling talk with an image of air," ends with a request that is full of grim humour:

Leave unchanged
The hands that I have kissed,
For old sake's sake.

This is a reminder that it is, perhaps, arrogant for a human being with all his limitations to think always in terms of a perfected condition. It robs one of "Asiatic courtesy." The poem is thus not at all about the condition of life after death. This is a lover's complaint that the woman he cherished never shared his deepest dreams and chose instead to espouse objective conceptions of life. The image and the conception of after-life are Indian, but they are reborn in Yeats's poem becoming thus a part of his personal utterance.

That Yeats's reading of the Upaniṣads was different from Tagore's can also be seen in his emphasis on King Janaka's point of view in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* Upaniṣad.⁵³ Janaka was a wise warrior-king. A proud brahmin, Gargya, comes to him and begins to expound the Spirit, the highest Self, in pantheistic terms. Janaka, however, punctuates the brahmin's exposition with a vehement negation: "No, no, that is not the right way to talk of Spirit." He himself wants to worship the Spirit as "the crowned King of all," "the heavenly drinker," "the still and the full," an "impregnable, unconquerable army"; as "tolerant," as "beauty," as "man." He is not forgetful that as a king he must not allow food to be exhausted in his realm, children to remain unenlightened, families to be undistinguished, enemies unconquered. And he knows that: "When self has mastered sense, man is said to sleep. Life is absorbed; sleep, sight, hearing, thinking, absorbed."⁵⁴ To surrender to the highest Self is thus going *beyond* history. When, however, faith in Self does not master sense but moves in dreams, one prospers in life, becomes a king as well as a great priest, "the high and the low" at the same time. And then "as a great king surrounded by his retinue moves in his own country at his pleasure, Self, surrounded by his senses, moves in his own body, at his pleasure."⁵⁵ This teaching of Janaka, the King, appealed to

Yeats and as a discipline seemed to him "always aristocratic, solitary and antithetical."⁵⁶

India in the past has generally stuck to the ideal of fulfilling the self, by which is always meant the Highest Self. Yeats chose to accept the position of King Janaka, who, though mindful of the Highest Self, refuses to go beyond civilization and history. The Christian position did not satisfy Yeats, because the inherent power of the individual self is denied there. Salvation for a Christian comes only through Grace.⁵⁷ He disliked the notion though he was not prepared either to affirm with the sage of the Upaniṣad that "man should strip him of the body, as the arrow-maker strips the reed, that he may know Him as perpetual and Pure."⁵⁸ He chose thus to read the Upaniṣads because he was less concerned with salvation of the soul than with a desirable human situation permitting the development of heroic ideals and artistic sensibilities. Denial of the body would be tantamount of dissolution of form without which an artist cannot function. Even music is not a completely disembodied joy.⁵⁹ And though form must be a resolution of all conflicting elements, it is hard to put entire emphasis on the essence of that resolution, and none at all on the constituent elements. Yeats could not close his mind to the highest realization of the self, but his emphasis, like King Janaka's in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* Upaniṣad, is on life in history.

Yeats's reading of the Upaniṣads was special but still within the range of Indian thought. His preoccupation with Indian sacred books can be seen from some poems he wrote, after 1915, chiefly in dialogue form. Echoes from the Upaniṣads are not difficult to find in these poems. The most important poem of this kind is "A Dialogue of Self and Soul" (1927). The soul argues, as in the Upaniṣads, for renunciation and release, and urges him to

Think of ancestral night that can,
If but imagination scorn the earth
And intellect its wandering
To this and that and t'other thing,
Deliver from the crime of death and birth.⁶⁰

The whole poem is a variation on the theme of the dialogue between Yama (the King of Death) and Nachiketa in the *Kaṭha* Upaniṣad.⁶¹ Nachiketa, a young ascetic, urges the King of Death to tell him the secret of attaining final redemption. Life has no charm for him as

it is subject to death and decay. "Mere long life, thinking of copulation and beauty," is not desirable for him. Yama is overcome by his importunities and tells him that "the impure, self-willed, unsteady man misses the goal and is born again and again." This, according to him, is the greatest punishment that a human soul could be subjected to. In Yeats's poem these words of threat are repeated almost word by word and the idea is refuted. Unlike Nachiketa, the Self says in reply to the Soul's exhortations:

A living man is blind and drinks his drop,
 What matter if the ditches are impure?
 What matter if I live it all once more?

 And what's the good of an escape
 If honour find him in wintry blast?

The Self is not dismayed by the prospect of further coming back to life, of being born again. "By a soldier's right" he claims "a charter to commit the crime once more," the crime of being born. He would be satisfied, he says, with those rare moments of sweetness that flows into the breast when mind attains unity. This is the surest guarantee for him that the antinomies are not ends in themselves. Contrary to the usual western notions, this "choice of rebirth, rather than deliverance from birth,"⁶² is not necessarily un-Indian. Yeats chose those portions of the Upaniṣads where he could get support for his own position. He therefore refuted the ascetic position of Nachiketa, and affirmed that of King Janaka.

In another poem, "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen" (1919),⁶³ he again uses the Upaniṣadic images of the "Swan"⁶⁴ and a "troubled mirror" to point out both his continued interest in those sacred books, and again the emphasis is shifted. Again he refers to those moments of resolution while refusing to go beyond life:

Some moralist or mythological poet
 Compares the solitary soul to a swan;
 I am satisfied with that,
 Satisfied if a troubled mirror show it,
 Before that brief gleam of its life be gone,
 An image of its state; . . .

He used the solitary swan⁶⁵ as an image of soul, but a swan that

leaps into the "desolate heaven" was different, because it "can bring wildness," and "a rage to end all things," all things that the poet's laborious life imagined, or wanted to create.⁶⁶ He makes this distinction clear in this poem.

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* probably had a great hold on Yeats's imagination. In the poem "Vacillation,"⁶⁷ begun in 1931, the echoes of the famous dialogue of Yama and Nachiketa can be heard again. The very first lines of the poem,

Between extremities
Man runs his course;
A brand, or flaming breath,
Comes to destroy
All those antinomies
Of day and night;
The body calls it death,
The heart remorse.
But if these be right
What is joy?

remind one of Yama's exhortations: "The good is one, the pleasant another; both command the soul. Who follows the good, attains sanctity; who follows the pleasant, drops out of the race."⁶⁸ Yeats maintains in the poem that death or remorse (Yama in the *Upaniṣad*) comes to destroy everything from which joy arises. Here the dialogue is between the Heart and the Soul, and the Heart asserts forcefully what the Self did in "A Dialogue of Self and Soul." These two poems more clearly explain Yeats's position in relation to the *Upaniṣads*. The choice, he suggests, is not between "the good" and "the pleasant." It is between heroism and renunciation, and he unhesitatingly chooses the former. On the seventh section of the poem "Vacillation," Yeats wrote to Olivia Shakespeare (January 3, 1932): "I feel that this is the choice of the saint (St. Theresa's ecstasy, Gandhi's smiling face): Comedy; and the heroic choice: Tragedy (Dante, Don Quixote)."⁶⁹ He declares in the same letter that the saint's choice is not his. And though he accepts all the miracles, he would by choice remain "a sinful man to the end," and think upon his death bed of all the nights he had wasted in his youth attempting to follow an ascetic ideal.

The poems referred to can certainly be understood without any knowledge of the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*. If, however, they are related,

the understanding of these poems is definitely deepened. These poems prove again that, except in the very early years, Yeats never accepted the extreme position in the Indian systems, but he did not reject the systems either. His inner life can be seen as an unending dialogue between the Self and the Soul, or the Soul and the Heart. "The swordsman throughout repudiates the saint," he wrote to Olivia Shakespeare, "but not without vacillation."⁷⁰ Perhaps because of this vacillation in his mind, a vacillation common to most men, Yeats maintained a life-long dialogue between the two halves of the self, that of the hero and that of the saint. And these dialogues remind one of many similar dialogues in the Upanisads.

The Upanisads represented to Yeats, as has been mentioned before, the "intellectual sophistry" that led to the logical dissolution of the universe in Buddhism. When the self was made the only good, as Buddha made it, the heroic society crumbled down. Buddha, he quotes a friend with approval, "tried to put down both Brahman [he means 'Brahmin'] and soldier, failed against the Brahman, was too successful against the soldier," for he destroyed the power of self-protection in India.⁷¹ This analysis, that Buddhism caused the downfall of India, is shared by others also. It was for this reason that Yeats chose Patanjali's Yoga system, for not being abstract at all and as confirmatory for his heroic ideals; he chose to view the Upanisads not as Tagore did, but as the Yoga system interpreted them, and made Buddha a symbol of the extreme "subjective loneliness" that he had rejected.

While Christ is the symbol of "objective loneliness,"⁷² Buddha represents, in Yeats, the opposite. However, the vision of the desirable civilization that Yeats cherished could not be represented by either figure, though his preference is for subjective nature. The particular use of Buddha as a symbol in the poem "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes"⁷³ (1919) is thus symptomatic of his special concern. The first vision is of a civilization of complete objectivity, of obedience to the cold spirits outside man. There is, therefore, no reliance on the individual self. The second vision, that the poet is ecstatic about, is of the Unity of Being where self-fulfillment can be attained, and is represented by a dancing girl between a Sphinx and Buddha. The Sphinx is Nature, and appears as the dragon in "Michael Robartes and the Dancer"⁷⁴ (1918). Somewhere between the perfection of this Nature and the perfection of Spirit, represented

by Buddha, comes a moment in history when the Unity of Being is possible to achieve. It is important to note that Yeats does not think like Hegel⁷⁵ that human history is moving away from the bondage of Nature toward the triumph of Spirit. The Sphinx and Buddha should both be there as "heraldic supporters guarding the mystery of the fifteenth phase"⁷⁶ where Yeats placed his Unity of Being. In *A Vision*, Yeats refers to this poem and admits that he should have put Christ instead of Buddha for Buddha represents in his system "introspective knowledge of the mind's self-begotten unity, an intellectual excitement." According to his system, therefore, the symbol of Christ should have been used here in conjunction with the Sphinx, because Christ stands for "the outward-looking mind, love and its lure."⁷⁷ But the fact that he did not either rewrite the poem or leave it altogether from his final collection, shows that in his vision of civilization Christ and Buddha are interchangeable symbols. The heroic age was as much undone by Christ in Europe, as by Buddha in India, and Yeats, therefore, does not plead for either. One may look back here and discover that Tagore had warmly declared in *Sādhanā* his appreciation of Buddhism. Their respective attitudes towards Buddha, as towards the Upaniṣads, are symptomatic of their difference on intellectual grounds.

Yeats had found in Tagore a deep reverence for Buddha, and perhaps came to the conclusion that, since Buddha's time, Indian civilization reflected only the Buddhist ideal of asceticism and renunciation. Thus he wrote in a later essay, "The Holy Mountain," that, "pre-occupied with the seeds of action [Karma] discoverable by those who have rejected all that is not themselves," India has "left to Europe the study and creation of civilization."⁷⁸ Perhaps he took pleasure in thinking that by adapting some of the ideas of Patañjali and Tantra he was incidentally pointing out the neglect in modern India of a valuable part of her ancient tradition. In "The Statues,"⁷⁹ a much later poetic meditation on the character of various civilizations in the past, he thus refers to the sculptured image of Buddha as indicative of India's conception of reality. The poem suggests that the art of sculpture, which shows a supreme command over material in expressing the dreams of the mind, made a journey through history from the Greece of Pythagorus and Phidias, crossed the "many headed" foam, and was significantly modified by the time it reached India. The profane perfection of the Greek

sculpture was transformed there for the expression of a state beyond nature, in the superhuman calm of Buddha. This transformation of the profane perfection has a parallel in the history of European sculpture.⁸⁰ The Phidian dream image, expressive of a vision of life, was replaced by scrupulous realism in Roman sculpture. As a result of this "exaltation of personality" without the element of dream, European instinct demanded an extreme objectivity, and "man had to annihilate himself"⁸¹ by following Christian ideals. About five centuries before this, India had seen her heroic age replaced by the age of renunciation, asceticism, and the annihilation of personality. The Christian denunciation of nature came from the conviction that man in himself is nothing, and "only God has value in Himself."⁸² The Buddhist denunciation of nature was the result of emphasizing the Self separated from all that is not itself. Yeats equated both the conditions as unsatisfactory for the artist.

But when he generalized from the sculptured image of Buddha that the veiled or half-veiled eyes of Indian and Chinese sculptures indicated weariness of the world and vision alike⁸³ he exhibited his lack of information about the history of Indian art. He did not know that mythological Hinduism continued to be much active even after Buddha's time. What he wrote in the poem "The Statues," is true for the statues of Buddha. The statues represent indeed the characteristic adaptation in India of the Greek ideal of sculpture. This tradition of art is known as the Gandhara tradition. But Yeats did not know of the other indigenous tradition of sculpture that gloriously recorded in India the mythological or Puranic Hindu ideals of life. Rothenstein points out the significant difference between these two traditions in Indian sculpture.⁸⁴ He blames the students of Oriental art that "Gandhara heresy" still survives and asserts that it should be regarded as the great achievement that "India evolved on the one hand, in the figure of the seated Buddha, a perfect expression of static repose, and on the other, in the invention of the dance of Shiva, a superb expression of the creative and destructive elements of nature."⁸⁵ Therefore, though Yeats's generalization about the artistic genius of India is only partially true, unknowingly he emphasized that part of Indian tradition which is mainly responsible for the dynamic side of Indian sculpture. Buddhism did not interest him so much as it did Tagore. His references to the statues of Buddha

serve only to clarify his preference, which was for the practical system of Yoga and the heroic system of Tantra.

Ideas corresponding to those of *A Vision* are to be found not only in the unfashionable Patañjali, but also in the Tantras — another neglected part of the Indian systems. I have discussed that relationship elsewhere.

¹ Joseph Hone, *W. B. Yeats, 1865-1939* (New York, 1943), p. 455.

² The Sanskrit word *Darśana* is derived from a root that means "to see," "to contemplate," "to comprehend."

³ Hone, p. 491.

⁴ See *A Vision* (1937), pp. 188n., 202, 205, 206, 208, 214, 220, 222-23, 239-40, 252n., 257ff., 260, 270, 277. Hereafter referred to as *A Vision* (B).

⁵ See the footnote of *A Vision* (B), p. 260: "When I wrote this sentence I had not met Shree (*sic*) Purohit Swami ...".

⁶ (a) "An Indian Monk" as the introduction of Shri Purohit Swami's autobiography, *An Indian Monk: His Life and Adventures* (London, 1932).

(b) "The Holy Mountain," being a very long essay as the introduction to the book of the same name, which is a "Story of a Pilgrimage to Lake Manas and of Initiation on Mount Kailas in Tibet" by the Master of Shri Purohit, 1934.

(c) "The Mandukya Upaniṣad," 1935.

(d) Preface to *The Ten Principal Upaniṣads* (London, 1937), put into English by Shri Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats.

(e) Introduction to *Aphorisms of Yoga* (London, 1938), done into English with a commentary by Shri Purohit Swami.

⁷ See W. B. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions*, pp. 509-530.

⁸ Yeats-Purohit, *The Ten Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 11.

⁹ See "A General Introduction For My Work" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 520.

¹⁰ John Eglinton, *Irish Literary Portraits* (London, 1935), p. 28.

¹¹ Richard Ellmann, *W. B. Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (London, 1949), pp. 196ff.

¹² See dedication of *A Vision* (1925) to "Vestigia," who is Mrs. MacGregor Mathers. This edition is later referred to as *A Vision* (A).

¹³ Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats* (London, 1954), p. 150.

¹⁴ *A Vision* (B), p. 71.

¹⁵ *Idem*.

¹⁶ See H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (Wheaton, Illinois, 1946), I, 213; V, 469-70, 480-85, 505, 514, 438.

¹⁷ Ellmann, *The Man and the Masks*, p. 230.

¹⁸ *A Vision* (A), p. 15.

¹⁰ In a footnote to Yeats-Purohit, *Upaniṣads* (p. 60n.), as well as in "The Holy Mountain" in *Essays and Introductions* (p. 448), Yeats mentions and discusses them. See also M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London, 1958), pp. 448ff.; Heinrich R. Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (New York, 1951), pp. 285ff.

²⁰ See S. Radhakrishnan, *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* (London, 1924), p. 48.

²¹ "The Mandukya Upaniṣad" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 481.

²² *Idem.*

²³ See Yeats's note in *A Vision* (B), p. 188n.

²⁴ See Yeats's discussion in "The Holy Mountain" and "The Mandukya Upaniṣad" in *Essays and Introductions*, pp. 460ff.

²⁵ Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*, p. 331.

²⁶ *Idem.*

²⁷ Hone, p. 260.

²⁸ *Idem.*

²⁹ *A Vision* (B), pp. 221ff.

³⁰ Yeats's examples of practices founded on the faith of the spirit world show that they ultimately benefit our living world. See *A Vision* (B), pp. 221-22.

³¹ *A Vision* (B), pp. 219ff.

³² *Idem.* Yeats mentions in the footnote that for similar reasons he cannot accept the position of Absolute Idealism. "Professor Bradley believed also that he could stand by the death-bed of wife or mistress and not long for an immortality with his form of Absolute Idealism, and besides he hated the common heart; an arrogant, sapless man."

³³ The girl was Iseult Gonne. Yeats used the image of Iseult dancing alone on a sea shore, as a symbol and used it in several poems. A study of these poems shows how an ordinary incident gradually assumed symbolic meaning in Yeats's mind. See "To a Child Dancing in the Wind" (written before December, 1912), "Two Years Later" (December 3, 1931?), "Michael Robartes and the Dancer" (1918), "The Double Vision of Michael Robartes" (1919), "Among School Children" (1926), and "Sweet Dancer" (1937). The same image appears in *A Vision* (B), p. 220.

³⁴ *A Vision* (B), pp. 237-40.

³⁵ *Idem.* At one time many Indian temples had on the staff dedicated "brides of God," called *Devadāshis*. With the British rule in India the system has been abolished.

³⁶ See "An Indian Monk" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 436.

³⁷ *Idem.*

³⁸ See Swami Akhilananda, *Hindu Psychology* (New York, 1946), pp. 44ff. The result of Yoga is an emotional balance, development of strong will and physical poise. Religion really begins with the fourth state of concentration, *Samadhi*, that Yeats never encouraged. In "The Mandukya Upaniṣad" he says that the last stages of Yoga for the final illumination and emancipation is not for all. Perhaps that is not desirable either. "I think it certain that Europeans, travelling the same way, enduring the same fasts, saying the same prayers, would have received nothing but perhaps a few broken dreams. Bhagawan Shri Hamsa's

evocation of 'the conscious,' of 'the unconscious,' depended in part upon innumerable associations from childhood on, in part upon race-memory." (*Essays and Introductions*, p. 485.)

³⁹ Shri Purohit Swami, *Aphorisms of Yoga*, p. 14.

⁴⁰ For an unknown reason Yeats consistently spells the name as Jadnyawalkya. See Swami, *Aphorisms of Yoga* and Yeats Purohit, *Upaniṣads*.

⁴¹ Swami, *Aphorisms of Yoga* (London, 1938), p. 15.

⁴² *Idem*.

⁴³ *Idem*.

⁴⁴ *Idem*.

⁴⁵ See R. Tagore, *Sādhana* (New York, 1915), pp. 33-34: "Through the rise and fall of empires; through the building up of gigantic piles of wealth and the ruthless scattering of them upon the dust . . . man is marching from epoch to epoch towards the fullest realisation of his soul—the soul which is greater than the things man accumulates, the deeds he accomplishes, the theories he builds; the soul whose onward course is never checked by death or dissolution."

⁴⁶ *A Vision* (B), p. 261.

⁴⁷ See Yeats-Purohit, *Upaniṣads*, pp. 158-59.

⁴⁸ Yeats, "The Holy Mountain" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 469.

⁴⁹ In *La recherche de l'absolu*. Quoted in Yeats's essay "Louis Lambert," in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 446.

⁵⁰ See "The Holy Mountain" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 448.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 469.

⁵² W. B. Yeats, *Collected Poems* (London, 1950), p. 172.

⁵³ See Yeats-Purohit, *Upaniṣads*, pp. 124ff.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-28.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

⁵⁶ *A Vision* (B), pp. 260-61.

⁵⁷ See "The Holy Mountain" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 467: "I have heard the clergy," writes Yeats, "talk of Grace, but that is beyond my knowledge." He uses the dramatic persona of Balzac, into whose mouth he puts the quoted words. But that is a poetic device to express what he himself had to say.

⁵⁸ See the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II. 3. 17. Yeats uses this image of the arrow-maker in *The Herne's Egg* (1938). His translation of the verse is not, however, accurate. The image of the arrow-maker is his creation. Dr. Radhakrishnan renders the same verse as: "Him one should draw out with firmness, from the body, as (one may do) the wind from the reed. Him one should know as the pure, the immortal, yea, Him one should know as the pure, the immortal."—*The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 647.

Changes of this nature are not infrequent in *The Ten Principal Upaniṣads* of Yeats and Shri Purohit Swami. This may be one of the reasons why Radhakrishnan in his bibliography in *The Principal Upaniṣads* (New York, 1953) does not mention Yeats's translation. But that he took notice of the book is proved by a footnote on page 18:

⁵⁹ See Tagore, *Sādhana*, pp. 141ff. Tagore there takes the position that not

even painting could adequately express the realization of beauty. Only music could, as music is not dependent on any tangible body. Tagore himself did not finally maintain that position. His two thousand and odd painted canvases would stand witness against this kind of incomplete generalization. One wonders if Yeats was not contending against Tagore in his poem "Ego Dominus Tuus" (1915) where *Hic* could perfectly represent Tagore's aesthetic position that art is made out of no tragic war, but is an expression of the heart overflowing with love.

⁶⁰ *Collected Poems*, p. 265.

⁶¹ See Yeats-Purohit, *Upanisads*, pp. 25ff.

⁶² See *Letters of W. B. Yeats* (London, 1955), p. 729. Yeats wrote to Olivia Shakespeare, in October, 1927, that he had made his Japanese sword and its silk covering his symbol of life, and so was in no mood of considering the negative advice of the Soul in the poem.

⁶³ *Collected Poems*, p. 232.

⁶⁴ See "The Holy Mountain" in *Essays and Introductions*, p. 460, where Yeats explains Hamsa (swan). It means "soul," "but is also the name of those emblems of the soul, the white-winged, red-beaked, red-legged water birds of Lake Manas Sarowar."

⁶⁵ The swan is solitary in the sense that all subjective souls are solitary. In his note on *Calvary* Yeats says: "Objective men, however personally alone, are never alone in their thought, which is always developed in agreement or in conflict with the thought of others and always seeks welfare of some cause or institution, while subjective men are more lonely the more they are true to type, seeking always that which is unique or personal." See *Plays and Controversies* (London, 1923), p. 459.

⁶⁶ See "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen."

⁶⁷ *Collected Poems*, p. 282.

⁶⁸ Yeats-Purohit, *Upanisads*, p. 29.

⁶⁹ Yeats's *Letters*, p. 790.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 798.

⁷¹ Swami, *Aphorisms of Yoga*, p. 14.

⁷² In a note to his poetic mask-play *Calvary* (1920) Yeats defines this idea. In this play the objective loneliness of Christ is contrasted with "a loneliness opposite in kind, that unlike His can be, whether joyous or sorrowful, sufficient to itself." Buddha and Christ are both lonely figures. Their difference is that one is subjective, while the other is objective. And yet while writing about a desirable civilization Yeats uses them as interchangeable symbols. See *Plays and Controversy*, pp. 459ff.

⁷³ *Collected Poems*, p. 192.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁷⁵ See "The Holy Mountain" in *Essays and Introductions*, pp. 466ff., as also *A Vision* (B), pp. 202ff.

Yeats refuses to accept Hegel's analysis that Greece delivered mankind from the bondage of the sphinx, the Asiatic element in the development of human history. History, according to Yeats, does not move in a straight line. Moreover, the subjugation of the Sphinx would not be a desirable situation at all.

⁷⁶ *A Vision* (B), p. 207.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁷⁸ *Essays and Introductions*, p. 47.

⁷⁹ *Collected Poems*, p. 381.

⁸⁰ *A Vision* (B), pp. 275ff.

⁸¹ Yeats's introduction to Swami, *Aphorisms of Yoga*, p. 16n.

⁸² *Idem.*

⁸³ *A Vision* (B), pp. 276-77.

⁸⁴ W. Rothenstein, *Men and Memories*, vol. II (New York), 1932), p. 251.

⁸⁵ *Idem.*

সংস্কৃত ছোটো গল্প : তার উত্থান ও বিবর্তন

গল্প বলা এবং গল্প শোনা মানুষের চিরন্তন অভ্যাস। যখন থেকে মানুষ তার আদিম জৈব স্তর অতিক্রম ক'রে মননলোকে প্রবেশ করতে আরম্ভ করেছে তখন থেকেই সে তার আন্তর-জীবন এবং পারিপার্শ্বিক জীবনের নানা অভিজ্ঞতা ও ঘটনাকে গল্পাকারে বলতে শুরু করেছে। কখনো তা নীতিমূলক এবং উপদেশাত্মক রূপ গ্রহণ করেছে, কখনো বা তা নিছক আনন্দ পরিবেশনের বাহক হ'য়েই প্রকাশ পেয়েছে।

সুপ্রাচীন কাল থেকেই পৃথিবীর নানা দেশে নানা সময়ে মানুষের জ্ঞান এবং সভ্যতার বিভিন্ন স্তরানুক্রমে নানা রকমের গল্প রচিত হ'য়ে আসছে। এ পর্যন্ত যতদূর জানা গেছে তাতে মনে হয় ইজিপ্টে খ্রীষ্টপূর্ব চার হাজার শতাব্দে রচিত *Tale of the Magicians*-ই হ'লো প্রাচীনতম গল্পসংগ্রহ। হিন্দু, হিব্রু, গ্রীক এবং আরবদেরও প্রাচীন গল্পসাহিত্য আছে। মধ্য ও রেনেসাঁস যুগে নানা ধরনের পশুপক্ষীর গল্প, Picaresque কাহিনী, *Gesta Romanorum*, *Decameron* এবং তার নানা অনুরূপ পাশ্চাত্য দেশের গল্প সাহিত্যকে সমৃদ্ধ করেছে।

প্রাচীন যুগের গল্প ছিলো কাহিনী জাতীয়। আধুনিক যুগে গল্প তথা ছোটোগল্প বলতে যে জিনিসটা বুঝি তার জন্মকাল ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দী, জন্মদেশ পশ্চিম। মধ্যযুগীয় *Decameron*-ই তার আদি বীজ।

প্রসঙ্গক্রমেই এই কথাগুলো এলো। Novelette, Tale, Sketch—এদেরই স্বল্পতর ক্রমপরিণতির ফলেই আধুনিক গল্পের জন্ম। তাছাড়া, আধুনিক যুগের ক্রমবর্ধমান যান্ত্রিক ব্যস্ততাহেতু সময়ভাব—তথা মানুষের চৈতন্য-অবচেতন মনের অলিগলির বিচিত্র আবিষ্কার আধুনিক গল্পকে জীবনের একটা ক্ষণ-অংশে সীমিত রেখেই সুসংহত অথচ নাটকীয় গতিময়তায় অপূর্ব রসঘন ক'রে তুলেছে। তার কোনোটাতে আছে জিজ্ঞাসা, কোনোটাতে বিস্ময়, কোনোটাতে বা সমাধানের কোনো চেষ্টা।

আমেরিকান লেখক এডগার অ্যালেন পো-ই আধুনিক গল্পের প্রথম রূপকার ব'লে

স্বীকৃত। ১৮৪২ সালে তিনি গল্পের যে-স্বরূপলক্ষণ নির্দেশ করেছিলেন মূলত তারই অনুসরণে গল্প-সাহিত্য নানা লেখকের, বিশেষ করে মোপাসাঁ এবং চেখভের, হাতে অপূর্ণ পরিণতির পথে এগিয়ে চললো। সে চলা থামেনি। নতুন-নতুন লেখকরা গল্পের নতুন ভাব ও রূপ সৃষ্টি করে চলেছেন। গল্প অন্তর্মুখী, কাব্যধর্মী এবং সাংকেতিক হ'য়ে উঠছে। জীবনের ক্ষণভূমিতে দাঁড়িয়ে আধুনিক গল্প তার স্ফুর্জিত এবং সীমিত পরিধির মধ্যেই মানুষের অন্তর্লোকের বিচিত্র কথা আমাদের জানিয়ে দিচ্ছে।

প্রাচীন এবং আধুনিক গল্প-সাহিত্যের আকৃতি-প্রকৃতিতে বিস্তর লক্ষণীয় প্রভেদ আছে। প্রাচীনকালের শিথিলবন্ধন দীর্ঘায়তন এখন ঘনপিনদ্ধ স্বল্পায়তনে রূপান্তরিত হয়েছে। ভাবে-ভাষায় আধুনিক গল্প একেবারে নতুন হ'য়ে উঠেছে—গল্পের ভাষা এখন কেবলমাত্র গল্প, তার ভাব আধুনিক দ্রুতসঞ্চারী জটিল জীবন এবং মনন ধর্মের প্রতিচ্ছায়া।

সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের গল্প-কাহিনী সাধারণভাবে অগ্ন্যগ্ন দেশের প্রাচীন গল্প-সাহিত্যের লক্ষণাক্রান্ত। বর্তমান প্রবন্ধে বৈদিক যুগ থেকে সংস্কৃত গল্প-সাহিত্যের একটা ধারাবাহিক বিবর্তন দেখবার চেষ্টা করা হবে।

ঋগ্বেদের সূক্তগুলি প্রধানত দেবস্তুতি ও প্রার্থনামূলক। কিন্তু ঋগ্বেদে কতগুলো সূক্ত আছে যাদের নাম সংবাদ এবং আখ্যানসূক্ত। এদের মধ্যে গল্প আছে। সংলাপধর্মী সংবাদসূক্ততে এমনকি নাটকীয় উপাদান পর্যন্ত আছে। দৃষ্টান্ত স্বরূপ পুরুবা-উর্বশী সংবাদসূক্তের নাম করা যায়। এই কাহিনী পরবর্তীকালে পুরাণে ও সাহিত্যে নানা ভাবে পল্লবিত হ'য়ে অপূর্ণ রূপ-মৌল্য লাভ করেছে।

অথর্ববেদে বৈদিক ব্রাহ্মণ্যধর্মবহির্ভূত অগ্ন্যগ্ন আর্ষসম্প্রদায় রচিত। সেখানে মানুষের ঐহিকজীবন বিষয়ক কথাই প্রধান। এই বেদে স্থানে স্থানে গল্প রচনা আছে। দৃষ্টান্ত স্বরূপ ১৫শ অধ্যায়ের ত্রাত্যবিষয়ক কাহিনীটির উল্লেখ করা যায়। প্রায় গল্পের বর্ণনাভঙ্গিতে সেখানে ত্রাত্যের কথা বলা হয়েছে।

বৈদিক সাহিত্যের একটি প্রধান অংশ ব্রাহ্মণ গণ্ডে রচিত। তাতে নানা আখ্যান আছে। যজ্ঞে এগুলো বর্ণিত হ'তো এবং সকলে শুনতো। তা ছাড়া অর্থবাদের (বিদ্বি-প্রশস্তির) প্রয়োজনে নানা আখ্যান রচিত হয়েছিল। সুপ্রসিদ্ধ চরৈবেতি মন্ত্ৰটি ঐতরেয় ব্রাহ্মণের একটি আখ্যানের তাৎপর্যমন্ত্ৰ।

বেদসাহিত্যের শেষ অংশ উপনিষদ। প্রচুর গল্প আছে উপনিষদে, যদিও এগুলো বিশেষ করে অধ্যাত্মচিন্তা ও জিজ্ঞাসা সম্পৃক্ত। কিন্তু গল্পের রস এদের মধ্যে নিটোল ভাবে উপস্থিত। কঠোপনিষদের যম-নচিকেতা কাহিনীতে নাটকীয় কৌতুহল ও গল্পরসের সমন্বয় ঘটেছে। ছান্দোগ্য উপনিষদের আরুণি-শ্বতকেতু কাহিনী বেদান্তের সর্বপ্রধান সিদ্ধান্ত তত্ত্বমসি তত্ত্ব প্রতিষ্ঠিত করেছে, কিন্তু সমস্ত বিষয়টি পরিবেশিত হয়েছে গল্পের

মাধ্যমে। ঐ উপনিষদেই জ্বালা-সত্যাকামের উপাখ্যান রবীন্দ্রনাথের কবিতায় পুনর্জন্ম লাভ করেছিলো। বৃহদারণ্যক উপনিষদের যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য-মৈত্রেয়ী সংবাদ রচিত হয়েছে গল্পের আকারেই। ঐ গল্পেই বহুশ্রুত বাক্য—‘যেনাহং নামতা শ্রাং কিমহং তেন কুর্যাম্’—রবীন্দ্রনাথ বহুবার আমাদের নতুন ভাবে শুনিয়েছেন।

বৈদিকসাহিত্যের বহু পরে সংস্কৃত পুরাণ উপপুরাণ রচিত হয়। ইতিমধ্যে রামায়ণ, মহাভারত, বৌদ্ধ ও জৈন সাহিত্য এবং সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের সমৃদ্ধির যুগে প্রচুর কাব্যনাটক রচিত হয়েছে। তবুও বৈদিক সাহিত্যের ধারা অনুসরণ ক’রে আমরা পুরাণের কথাই আগে উপস্থাপিত করছি, কারণ পুরাণের জন্ম বেদে। শ্রীজীব গোস্বামী পুরাণের সংজ্ঞার্থ নির্দেশ করেছেন—‘বেদার্থ পূরণাং পুরাণম্।’ সংজ্ঞার্থটি এক হিসেবে অত্যন্ত সার্থক ও লক্ষ্যভেদী। কারণ সূত্রাকারে বেদে যা আছে, পুরাণ জন-সাধারণের জন্তু তার লোকায়ত ব্যাখ্যা করেছেন। এবং এই জগেই পুরাণে তাকে সর্বজনবোধ্য প্রাঞ্জল ও সংক্রামক করবার জন্তু নানা কাহিনীর অবতারণা করা হয়েছে। ফলে পুরাণ আজকাল আমাদের কাছে গল্পের আকরবিশেষ হ’য়েই দেখা দেয়। বেদে মেঘকে বৃত্র অসুর বলা হয়েছে—যেহেতু সে জনকে আবৃত ক’রে রাখে। ঋষিরা ইন্দ্রকে স্তুতি করেছেন বৃত্রের কাছ থেকে বর্ষণকে মুক্তি দেবার জন্তু। এই সূত্রকে অবলম্বন ক’রে পুরাণে ইন্দ্র-বৃত্রাসুরের পূর্ণ কাহিনী গাঁড়ে উঠলো। বেদে বিষ্ণু সূর্যের সমার্থক। প্রতিদিন সূর্যের (বিষ্ণুর) তিনটি পদক্ষেপ—প্রাতঃ মধ্যাহ্ন এবং অপরাহ্ন। এই ত্রিবিক্রমকে অবলম্বন ক’রে পুরাণ আমাদের দিলো বলি-বামনের উপাখ্যান। এ-সব ছাড়াও নানা ধরনের গল্প পুরাণে আছে এবং সেগুলো বিশেষ ক’রে রচিত হয়েছিল জনমানসের শিক্ষার জন্তুই। পুরাণকথকরা এককালে জনশিক্ষক ছিলেন। ধরাদ্রোণ, কুশধ্বজ, জড়ভরতের গল্প কেবল উপদেশাত্মকই নয়, রসেও ভরপুর। অর্থাৎ শিল্পিতা শেষ পর্যন্ত নীতিসূত্রে অতিক্রম ক’রে বিনোদের আকর হ’য়ে উঠলো।

বৈদিক সাহিত্যের পরেই সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের সূচনা। রামায়ণ মহাভারত তার আদি গ্রন্থ। এই দুই মহাকাব্যের পৌরাণিক সন্থকে মতভেদ আছে, যদিও বাল্মীকিই আদি কবি বলে পরিচিত। এই দুই মহাকাব্যেই, বিশেষ ক’রে মহাভারতে, মূল কাব্যবস্তু ছাড়া বহু আখ্যান ও উপাখ্যান সংযুক্ত হয়েছে। এই সংযোজনের পিছনে কেবল ব্রাহ্মণ্য প্রভাবই ছিলো না। মহাভারতের বহু গল্প শ্রমণ, ভিক্ষু, যতি, বৌদ্ধ প্রভৃতি সম্প্রদায় নিজেদের ধর্মমত প্রচারের জন্তু রচনা করেছিলেন। কিন্তু তা ছাড়াও কাব্যসৌন্দর্যময় নানা আখ্যান এই দুই গ্রন্থেই আছে। রামায়ণে শবরী এবং ঋতশৃঙ্গের উপাখ্যান, মহাভারতে দুঃশাস্তু শকুন্তলা, নলদময়ন্তী, সাবিত্রী সত্যবান, বিদুলা এবং ষযাতি উপাখ্যান সকলেই জানেন। ঐগুলোর প্রত্যেকটির মানবিক আবেদন অফুরানভাবে আমাদের আকর্ষণ করে।

মহাভারতে গল্পের ভিতরে গল্প ; পরে আরব্যউপাখ্যান বা অগ্নি অনেক প্রাচীন সংকলনেও এই কৌশলই ব্যবহার করা হয়েছিলো। তবে মহাভারতের গল্পগুলি বেশির ভাগই অবশ্য নীতিগত।

এতক্ষণ পর্যন্ত আমরা যে ধারাটি অনুসরণ ক'রে এসেছি তা সংস্কৃত প্রকৃত গল্প সাহিত্যের পূর্বভূমিকারূপেই করা হয়েছে। কারণ সংস্কৃত ছোটো গল্পের সত্যিকার আরম্ভ পঞ্চতন্ত্র থেকে। কিন্তু তার পূর্বে বৌদ্ধ-জাতক সম্পর্কে একটু আলোচনা অপ্রাসঙ্গিক হবে না।

বুদ্ধদেবের তিরোধানের দু-তিনশো বৎসরের মধ্যে বৌদ্ধধর্ম এবং দর্শনের পরিবর্তন হ'তে থাকে এবং বুদ্ধ সম্পর্কে নানা অলৌকিক কথাও প্রচারিত হয়। গৌতম বুদ্ধত্ব প্রাপ্ত হবার পূর্বে আরো বহুবার বোধিসত্ত্বরূপে জন্মগ্রহণ করেছিলেন এ-রকম একটি মতবাদ প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয়। এরই ফলস্বরূপ বৌদ্ধ জাতকের উৎপত্তি। এগুলি পালি ভাষায় রচিত ছোটো ছোটো গল্পের আকারে বুদ্ধদেবের পূর্ব-পূর্ব জন্ম বৃত্তান্ত। যত দিন গিয়েছে এগুলোর সংখ্যা বেড়েছে এবং রামায়ণ মহাভারত পঞ্চতন্ত্র প্রভৃতির বিভিন্ন গল্প বৌদ্ধ ছদ্মবেশ ধারণ ক'রে এদের মধ্যে অন্তর্প্রবিষ্ট হয়েছে। বুদ্ধদেব পূর্ব-পূর্ব জন্মে বহুবার তির্যক যোনিতে জন্মগ্রহণ করেছিলেন, জাতকের গল্পে এইরকম বিবরণও আছে ; কিন্তু প্রত্যেকটি গল্পেরই মূল আকর্ষণ মানবীয় ; তদানীন্তন সমাজ-জীবনধারারও পরিচয় তার উপভোগ্যতা এবং আকর্ষণ বাড়িয়ে তুলেছে। কাহিনীগুলির পরিধি স্বল্পবিস্তৃত। সংস্কৃত গল্পরচনার আঙ্গিকে জাতকের প্রভাব ছিলো, এই রকম অনুমান প্রায় স্বতঃসিদ্ধ, যদিও উত্তরকালের জাতকে সংস্কৃত গল্পের বস্তু-প্রভাব ঘটেছিলো।

ঠিক ছোটো গল্পের আঙ্গিকে সংস্কৃত গল্প-সাহিত্যের আরম্ভ পঞ্চতন্ত্র থেকে, এ-কথা আগেই বলেছি। এর আঙ্গিক গঠনে নিঃসন্দেহে জাতকের প্রভাব ছিলো। কিন্তু প্রাচীনতর বৈদিক ও সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের ইতস্তত বিক্ষিপ্ত গল্পেরচিত আখ্যান উপাখ্যানের আদর্শও কম ক্রিয়াশীল ছিলো না। প্রাচীন সাহিত্য থেকে যদৃচ্ছাক্রমে অনেক আখ্যান উপাখ্যানের দৃষ্টান্ত উদ্ধৃত করা যায় যেগুলি একক এবং বিচ্ছিন্নভাবে প্রকৃত গল্প হিসেবেই বিচার্য।

সংস্কৃত ছোটো গল্পের উত্থানের পিছনে প্রধানত তিনটি প্রেরণা কাজ ক'রে ছিলো—চিন্তাবিনোদন, অবসরযাপন এবং শিক্ষাদান। তৃতীয় প্রেরণাটি সম্ভবত এসেছিলো রাজাদের কাছ থেকে ; পঞ্চতন্ত্র তার সাক্ষ্য দিচ্ছে। 'সুকুমারমতি বালকগণকে শিক্ষা দেবার জন্য এ-গ্রন্থ রচিত হয়েছিলো'—এই কথা সেখানে নির্বিকার ও অনাবৃতভাবেই বলা আছে : 'এতৎ পঞ্চতন্ত্রং নাম নীতিশাস্ত্রং বাল্যবোধনার্থং ভূতলে সংপ্রবৃত্তম্।'

পঞ্চতন্ত্র এবং তদনুবর্তী গল্পগ্রন্থগুলো সরল সংস্কৃত গড়ে রচিত। গল্প এবং চম্পূ কাহিনী-কাব্যের গুরুভার সাড়স্বর অলংকৃত ভাষা এদের মধ্যে নেই। লোককথার (Folk-Tales) নতুনত্ব এবং প্রাণাবেগের দ্বারা এগুলো সজীবিত। এদের ছোটো ভাগ আছে—এক ভাগের চরিত্র মানুষ, অল্প ভাগের মানবের অগ্ন্যান্ত জীব অর্থাৎ পশুপক্ষী। আনন্দ পরিবেশনের মধ্য দিয়ে জীবন ও প্রকৃতির সঙ্গে পরিচিত ক’রে দেবার চেষ্টা এ-সকল গল্পের মূখ্য উদ্দেশ্য। তা ছাড়া, গল্পের মধ্যে এমন সব শ্লোক রয়েছে যেগুলি চুখকাকারে গল্প এবং নীতিকে একই সঙ্গে ব’লে দেয়। একটি দৃষ্টান্ত দেওয়া হচ্ছে—এবং হিতোপদেশের এ-গল্প সকলেই জানেন :

বুদ্ধির্ঘৃণ্য বলং তস্মা নিবুদ্বেস্তু কুতো বলম্।

পশু সিংহো মদোন্নতঃ শশকেন নিপাতিতঃ ॥

গল্প-সাহিত্যের সর্বাঙ্গে পঞ্চতন্ত্রের স্থান। এ-গ্রন্থের রচনাকাল সম্বন্ধে মতভেদ আছে। তবে তা খ্রীষ্টজন্মের পরে রচিত এ-বিষয়ে কোনো সন্দেহ নেই—সম্ভবত ২য় শতকের পরে রচিত। বহু ভাষায় এর অনুবাদ হয়েছে এবং এটি পৃথিবীতে বহুল প্রচারিত গ্রন্থগুলির অন্যতম। পহ্লবী, সিরিয়াক এবং আরবী ভাষায় এর অনুবাদ ৬ষ্ঠ থেকে ৮ম শতাব্দীর মধ্যেই হয়। সম্ভবত আরবী অনুবাদের মধ্য দিয়েই এ-গ্রন্থ ইংরোপে প্রচারিত হয়েছিলো। ঈশপের কথামালার অনেকগুলো এরই উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত। পাঁচটি খণ্ডে বা তম্বে বিভক্ত ছিলো ব’লে এ-গ্রন্থের নাম পঞ্চতন্ত্র। পাঁচটি ভাগ—মিত্রভেদ, মিত্রলাভ, কাকোলুকীয়, লঙ্কপ্রণাশ এবং অপরীক্ষিতকারক। নামগুলো গল্পের প্রকৃতি নির্দেশক। পঞ্চতন্ত্রের বহু গল্পের সঙ্গেই পাঠকমহল পরিচিত। রাজকুমারদের নীতিশিক্ষা ও জীবন সম্বন্ধে অভিজ্ঞতা প্রদান মূল উদ্দেশ্য হ’লেও গল্পগুলির মধ্যে মানব এবং পশুচরিত্রের তীক্ষ্ণ ও সুন্দর বিশ্লেষণ আছে। একটি মাত্র গল্পের উল্লেখ করছি—সিংহশৃগালশিশুকথা। পশুর মধ্যেও স্বাভাবিক প্রবৃত্তিতে বিজাতীয়ের প্রতি কী ভাবে মমতার উদ্বেক হয় তার বিবরণ এই গল্পে আছে। পশু-জগতে এ-জাতীয় ঘটনা আমরা অনেক সময়েই লক্ষ্য ক’রে থাকি। পঞ্চতন্ত্রের গল্পগুলির মধ্যে মানুষ এবং পশুপ্রকৃতি পার্থক্যের শক্তি দেখা যায়।

• ১১২২ খ্রীষ্টাব্দে জৈন ভিক্ষু পূর্ণভদ্র পঞ্চতন্ত্রে ২১টি নতুন গল্প যোগ করেছিলেন যেগুলি এখন পঞ্চাখ্যানক নামে পরিচিত।

পঞ্চতন্ত্রের পরে হিতোপদেশ উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্প গ্রন্থ। রচয়িতা নারায়ণ বঙ্গদেশের লোক। রচনাকাল ৯ম খ্রীষ্টাব্দের পরে কোনো সময়। এই গ্রন্থের আদর্শ পঞ্চতন্ত্র। হিতোপদেশের চারটি খণ্ড আছে। নারায়ণ কেবল পঞ্চতন্ত্রকেই অনুসরণ করেননি, তিনি অগ্ন্যান্ত বহু গ্রন্থ থেকেও উপাদান ও অনুভাবনা সংগ্রহ করেছিলেন। তার মধ্যে

কামন্দকীয় নীতিসার একটি। হিতোপদেশের উপর পঞ্চতন্ত্রের এত প্রভাব যে পঞ্চতন্ত্রের চতুর্থতন্ত্রের সঙ্গে এর তৃতীয় খণ্ডের প্রায় কোনোই ব্যবধান লক্ষ করা যায় না। হিতোপদেশেও মানুষ এবং পশুপক্ষীর গল্প আছে। তা ছাড়া রয়েছে গল্পের ভিতরে গল্প, আগে মহাভারতে যে-কৌশল গ্রহণ করা হয়েছিল। দৃষ্টান্তস্বরূপ মৃগ-কাক-শৃগাল কথার উল্লেখ করা যায়। বীরবরোপাখ্যান হিতোপদেশের একটি প্রসিদ্ধ গল্প। প্রভুভক্তি মানুষকে কত বড় আত্মত্যাগী করতে পারে তার উজ্জল নিদর্শন এই গল্পটিকে উপভোগ্য করে তুলেছে।

ছোটো গল্পের আলোচনায় গুণাঢ্য রচিত বৃহৎকথার স্থান অনস্বীকার্য, যদিও এ-গ্রন্থ আজ কেবল ঋতিতেই স্থিত; কেননা তার কোনো পাণ্ডুলিপি বা পুঁথি এ-পর্যন্ত পাওয়া যায়নি। বাণ স্ববন্ধু ও দণ্ডী বৃহৎকথার নাম উল্লেখ করেছেন। এ-গ্রন্থ পৈশাচী ভাষায় লিখিত হয়েছিলো কিন্তু এখন তা সম্পূর্ণই বিলুপ্ত। এক সময় এ-গ্রন্থ ছিলো বহুল প্রচারিত। গুণাঢ্য সম্বন্ধে ক্ষেমেন্দ্রের বৃহৎকথামঞ্জরী, সোমদেবের কথাসরিৎসাগর, এবং জয়রথের হরচিন্তামণিতে কিছু তথ্য পাওয়া যায়। কথাসরিৎসাগরে তাঁর সম্বন্ধে যে-কাহিনী আছে তাতে জানা যায় তিনি পৈশাচী ভাষাতে নিজের রক্ত দ্বারা ৭ লক্ষ শ্লোক লিপিবদ্ধ করেছিলেন; কিন্তু ৬ লক্ষ শ্লোকই অগ্নিদগ্ধ করেন। কাহিনীটি পল্লবিত এবং সর্বত্র বিশ্বাসযোগ্য নয়; তবে এটুকু বোঝা যায় যে কোনো অজ্ঞাত কারণে গুণাঢ্যের গ্রন্থ সম্পূর্ণই বিনষ্ট হয়েছিলো।

এ-কথা তবু মানতে হবে যে বৃহৎকথার গল্প পরবর্তী গল্প-সাহিত্যকে প্রভাবিত করে। কারণ, বৃহৎকথা লুপ্ত হলেও গল্পগুলির প্রচলন ও সম্প্রচার একটুও কমেনি। একেই অবলম্বন করে রচিত হয় বুদ্ধস্বামীর বৃহৎকথা শ্লোক সংগ্রহ, ক্ষেমেন্দ্রের বৃহৎকথা-মঞ্জরী এবং সোমদেবের কথাসরিৎসাগর। এ-সকল গ্রন্থ পশ্চে রচিত, কিন্তু গল্পের বৃহৎ ভাণ্ডার।

১০ম-১১শ শতাব্দী থেকেই মূলত পঞ্চতন্ত্রের আঙ্গিক অনুসরণ করে সহজ সরল ও প্রাঞ্জল গদ্যে বহু গল্পগ্রন্থ রচিত হ'তে থাকে। তার মধ্যে যেটি প্রধান সেই হিতোপদেশের কথা আগেই উল্লিখিত হয়েছে এবং এ-সকল গল্পের বৈশিষ্ট্যের কথাও আমরা উল্লেখ করেছি। লৌকিক ঐতিহ্য এবং জীবনের অভিজ্ঞতা এ-সকল গল্পের উপাদান ও প্রেরণা যুগিয়েছিলো। গল্পের যথার্থ আঙ্গিক (story form) এবং সহজ গদ্য-ভঙ্গিও মোটামুটি প্রতিষ্ঠিত করেছিলো বলে এদের অবদান স্বরগীয়। কেননা এদের প্রভাবের ফলেই উত্তরকালের ছোটো গল্প সম্পূর্ণই পার্থিব ও ঐহিক হ'য়ে ওঠে।

১২শ শতাব্দীতে চিন্তামণি ভট্ট শুক-সম্পত্তি কথা রচনা করেন। এতে ৭০টি গল্প আছে। দেবদাস নামে এক ব্যক্তির একটি শুক পক্ষী ছিলো। কালক্রমে দেবদাসের রূপসী পত্নীর উপর রাজার লোলুপ দৃষ্টি পড়েছিলো বলে রাজাজ্ঞায় দেবদাসকে দূরদেশে চলে

যেতে হয়। কিন্তু যাবার আগে দেবদাস শুকের উপর স্ত্রীর সব দায়িত্ব অর্পণ ক'রে যায়। দেবদাসের পত্নী রাজার প্রতি আকৃষ্ট হ'য়ে যেই রাত্রে গৃহত্যাগের উদ্যোগ করেন তখনই শুক তাঁকে তাঁর স্বামীর প্রতি বিশ্বাসঘাতকতার কী ফল হ'তে পারে তা স্মরণ করিয়ে দেয় এবং অতুরূপ অবস্থায় অতীতে প্রোষিতভর্তৃকারা কী করতেন সে সম্বন্ধে এক-একটি গল্প বলে। গল্পের দ্বারা আকৃষ্ট ও কৌতূহলী হ'য়ে দেবদাসের পত্নীর সে-রাত্রে আর গৃহত্যাগ করা হ'লো না। এভাবে ৭০ রজনী অতিবাহিত হ'লো। যথাকালে দেবদাস ফিরে এলেন। তাঁর পত্নী পাপাচরণ থেকে রক্ষা পেলেন। এ-গল্পে মানবিক উপাদান প্রচুর। প্রোষিতভর্তৃকা সুন্দরী নারীর পদে-পদে কী বিপদ এ-গল্পে তাই পাওয়া যায়। এ-কাহিনী সকল দেশের সকল যুগের কাহিনী। এ-জাতীয় কাহিনী অনেক দেশেই পাওয়া যায়, আরব্যরজনী ও বোকাচ্চিয়োতেও অতুরূপ একাধিক কাহিনী চোখে পড়ে।

এর পরেই গল্প-সাহিত্যের যেটি মূল্যবান সংগ্রহ তা হ'লো বেতাল পঞ্চবিংশতি। নৃপতি ও শবসাধকের উপাখ্যান ছাড়া আরও ২৫টি গল্প এতে আছে। গল্পগুলো খুব পুরনো হ'লেও চিত্তাকর্ষক। বলার ভঙ্গিও খুব সুন্দর। তাছাড়া, গল্পগুলি বুদ্ধিদীপ্ত। এদের রচয়িতা শিবদাস। মূল গল্পের কাঠামোতে যে-ভাবে ২৫টি গল্প সন্নিবেশিত করা হয়েছে সংক্ষেপে তা এই রকম : বিক্রমাদিত্যকে এক সন্ন্যাসী প্রতিদিন ফল উপহার দিতেন এবং প্রতিদিন সে ফলের ভিতর একটি ক'রে রক্ত পাওয়া যেতো। সন্ন্যাসীর অতুরোধে বিক্রমাদিত্য স্বশানের এক বৃক্ষ থেকে একটি শব আনতে যান। সেই শবকে আশ্রয় ক'রে একটি বেতাল থাকতো। বিক্রমাদিত্য যতবার শব নিচে নিয়ে আসেন বেতাল তাঁকে একটি ক'রে হৈয়ালি-নির্ভর, সমস্তামূলক গল্প বলে এবং সমস্তার সমাধান চায়। বিক্রমাদিত্য যথার্থ উত্তর দেন, কিন্তু তাঁর মৌনভঙ্গের সুযোগ নিয়ে বেতাল আবার গাছে উঠে পড়ে। এভাবে বেতাল বিক্রমাদিত্যকে ২৫টি গল্প বলেছিলো। সেই গল্পগুলিই এ-গ্রন্থের গল্প।

আনুমানিক ১৩শ শতকে সিংহাসনদ্ব্যজ্ঞিকা বা বিক্রমার্চরিত রচিত হয়। এটাই সু-প্রসিদ্ধ বত্রিশসিংহাসন। এতে বত্রিশটি গল্প আছে। বেতাল পঞ্চবিংশতির তুলনায় এ-গল্পগুলি ভাষা এবং শিল্পিতার দিক থেকে হীনতর। গল্পে আছে, বিক্রমাদিত্য ইন্দ্রের কাছ থেকে একটি সিংহাসন উপহার পেয়েছিলেন। তাতে ৩২টি পুত্রলিকা ক্ষোদিত ছিলো। বিক্রমাদিত্য শালিবাহন কর্তৃক পরাজিত ও নিহত হবার পর ঐ সিংহাসন কালক্রমে মাটির নিচে চলে যায়। রাজা ভোজ এক সময় ঐ সিংহাসনটি উদ্ধার করেন। কিন্তু যখন তিনি তার উপর উপবেশন করতে গেলেন তখন ৩২টি পুতুল জীবন্ত হ'য়ে ওঠে এবং প্রত্যেকেই বিক্রমাদিত্য সম্পর্কে একটি ক'রে গল্প ব'লে চ'লে যায়। এই বইতে ঐ গল্পগুলিই সংকলিত হয়েছিলো। *

ভরটক নামক উপহাসাস্পদ শৈব সন্ন্যাসীসম্প্রদায়কে নিয়ে ভরটকদ্বাত্রিংশিকা রচিত হয়। এতেও ৩২টি গল্প আছে। মৈথিল কবি বিহাপতি পুরুষপরীক্ষা নামক গল্প-গ্রন্থ রচনা করেছিলেন। ভাষা মধুর এবং প্রাঞ্জল। এ-গ্রন্থে ৪৪টি গল্প আছে। প্রত্যেকটি গল্পই পুরুষালি গুণ সম্পর্কে লেখা। একদা এটি খুব জনপ্রিয় হয়েছিলো, এবং এখনো তার জনপ্রিয়তা অক্ষুণ্ণ আছে। রাজশেখর প্রবন্ধকোষ নামক গল্পগ্রন্থ রচনা করেন। তাছাড়া মেরুতুঙ্গের প্রবন্ধচিন্তামণি এবং অগ্ন্যদের রচিত আরো কতগুলি গল্প সংকলন আছে। জৈনরা কথানক নামীয় প্রচুর গল্পগ্রন্থ রচনা করেছিলেন। কিন্তু তাতে গল্প রসের চেয়ে উপদেশ দানের দিকে দৃষ্টি বেশি ছিলো।

প্রসঙ্গক্রমে সংস্কৃত গল্পসাহিত্যের আর-একটি দিক সংক্ষেপে একটু উল্লেখ করা প্রয়োজন। সংস্কৃত গল্পকাব্যে (Prose Romance) বাণভট্টের কাদম্বরী, শুবঙ্কুর বাসবদত্তা, দণ্ডীর দশকুমারচরিত, অবন্তীসুন্দরীকথা, ধনপালের তিলকমঞ্জরী, সোড়চলের উদয়সুন্দরীকথা, বামন ভট্টবাণের বেমভূপালচরিত প্রভৃতি দীর্ঘায়ত গল্পগ্রন্থ স্বাদের দিক থেকে রমণ্যাস জাতীয়। আধুনিক গল্প-উপন্যাসের প্রধান লক্ষণ বাস্তবাহুগত্য এদের মধ্যে কম। মূল উপাখ্যানকে অবলম্বন করে সাড়ম্বর অলংকৃত ভাষার বিভিন্ন রীতিতে কবিগণ এই সব গল্প-কাব্য রচনা করেছেন। বাণভট্ট এঁদের মধ্যে শ্রেষ্ঠ। কাদম্বরীর শব্দচিত্র ও কবিত্ব অপূর্ব সুন্দর, পড়বার সময় পাঠকের মন সেই রমণীয় কবিতা ও উজ্জ্বল চিত্রশালাতেই নিবিষ্ট হয়; গল্প যেন অনেক পিছনে চলে। তবে দণ্ডীর দশকুমারচরিতের গল্পগুলোকে আলাদাভাবে গল্প বলে ধরা যায় এবং সেগুলোর মধ্যে বাস্তবজীবনের আলেখ্য বহু স্থলেই উজ্জ্বল হয়ে উঠেছে। দণ্ডীর গল্প রচনা সমঞ্জসিত, নিরর্থক শব্দাডম্বরে তাঁর রচনা ক্লিষ্ট হয়ে ওঠেনি। চরিত্র-চিত্রণেও তিনি সিদ্ধহস্ত। উপরোক্ত লেখকদের জীবৎকাল ৭ম-১০ম শতাব্দী। রোমান্স জাতীয় গল্পকাব্যকে স্থূলভাবে দুটো শ্রেণীতে ভাগ করা হয়েছিলো—কথা ও আখ্যায়িকা। বাণের কাদম্বরী হচ্ছে কথা আর হর্ষচরিত হচ্ছে আখ্যায়িকা। কাব্যাদর্শকার দণ্ডী এ-ভেদকে একেবারেই অস্বীকার করেছেন। তাঁর মতে দুটোই এক জাতীয়।

পরবর্তীকালে অলংকৃত গল্পের পরিবর্তন ঘটে। এই পরিবর্তন ঘটে প্রধানতঃ জৈন লেখকদের হাতে। জৈন ধর্মের কথা সাধারণ্যে প্রচার করার জন্ত জৈনরা একদিকে প্রাকৃত, অগ্ন্যদিকে সহজ সংস্কৃত গল্পে বহু গল্প রচনা করেন। সংস্কৃত সাহিত্য জৈনদের নিকট এজ্ঞাত ঋণী। গ্রন্থ—উপমিতি-ভাবপ্রপঞ্চকথা, চম্পক-শ্রেষ্ঠিকথা, পাল-গোপাল-কথানক, প্রবন্ধকোষ, সম্যক্‌স্বকৌমুদী প্রভৃতি।

গল্পকাব্য লেখার রেওয়াজ কিন্তু এক সময় ধীরে ধীরে কমে এলো, তার বদলে রচিত হ'তে লাগলো গল্প-পঞ্চময় কাহিনীকাব্য। এদের নাম চম্পূ। ১০ম শতাব্দীতে ত্রিবিজ্ঞম

বা সিংহাদিত্য রচিত নলদময়ন্তী-কাহিনীমূলক নলচম্পুই প্রাচীনতম এবং শ্রেষ্ঠ চম্পুকাব্য।
জৈন সোমদেব রচিত যশস্তিলকচম্পু এবং ধারানরপতি ভোজ কর্তৃক রচিত রামায়ণচম্পুও
উল্লেখযোগ্য গ্রন্থ। শেযোক্ত গ্রন্থ অতি জনপ্রিয়।

সংস্কৃত ছোটো গল্প সমসময়ে ও পরবর্তীকালে বিভিন্ন ভাষার সাহিত্যকে প্রভাবিত
করেছিলো। পঞ্চতন্ত্রের ভিতর পালি বৌদ্ধজাতকের প্রভাব ছিলো; কিন্তু সংস্কৃতে
রচিত আর্যসূরের জাতকমালা, এবং বৌদ্ধ অবদানশতক ও দিব্যাবদান পঞ্চতন্ত্রের প্রায়
সমকালীন। পরবর্তী সংস্কৃত ছোটো গল্পের অঙ্গসংস্থান ও বিজ্ঞাসে, অর্থাৎ আঙ্গিকগঠনে,
এদের প্রভাব হয়তো ছিলো। কিন্তু অভ্যন্তরীণ বিভিন্ন ভাষার সাহিত্যে পঞ্চতন্ত্রের
প্রভাবই সবিশেষ লক্ষণীয়। কেবলমাত্র বাইবেল ও গীতা ছাড়া পঞ্চতন্ত্রের মতো
পৃথিবীর অণু কোনো গ্রন্থের এত বেশী অনুবাদ এবং সংস্করণ হয়নি। পঞ্চাশটির বেশি
ভাষায় প্রায় দুশোর বেশি এর অনুবাদ ও প্রকার (version) হয়েছে। এবং এই সব
ভাষার তিন-চতুর্থাংশ অভ্যন্তরীণ; জাভা থেকে আইসল্যান্ড পর্যন্ত তার বিস্তৃতি।

পঞ্চতন্ত্রের প্রথম তন্ত্রের করটকদমনক নামীয় দুই শৃংগালের প্রসিদ্ধ গল্পের নামানুসারে
আরবী অনুবাদের নাম হ'লো 'কলিলাহ্ ও দিল্লাহ্', এবং সিরিয়াক অনুবাদের নাম
'কলিলগ্ ও দমনগ্'। পঞ্চতন্ত্রের বিবৃতিকৌশল আরবীয় ও পারসীকদের দ্বারা অনুকৃত
হয়েছিলো। চীনে বাস্কের মতো পঞ্চতন্ত্রের গল্পগুলিও একটির ভিতরে আরেকটি
সন্নিবিষ্ট। আরবী সহস্র-রজনীউপাখ্যানমালার আদর্শ এখান থেকেই গৃহীত। আরবী
অনুবাদের সাহায্যে পঞ্চতন্ত্রের গল্প পরবর্তীকালে ইউরোপ খণ্ডে ছড়িয়ে পড়ে, এবং তাই
পরে ঈশপের কথামালা ও লা ফঁতাইন-এর নীতিসুধার জন্ম দিয়েছিলো।

বাংলা গল্পে পঞ্চতন্ত্র হিতোপদেশ, পুরুষপরীক্ষা ও বত্রিশসিংহাসনের অনুবাদ ফোর্ট
উইলিয়ম কলেজ প্রতিষ্ঠার সময় থেকেই আরম্ভ হয়। কেরীর ইতিহাসমালার অনেকগুলি
গল্পের উৎস পঞ্চতন্ত্র ও হিতোপদেশ। বেতালপঞ্চবিংশতির অনুবাদ স্বয়ং বিজ্ঞাসাগর মহাশয়
করেছিলেন, যদিও হিন্দি অনুবাদের অনুসরণে। ইদানীন্তন কালে বেতাল পঞ্চবিংশতির
একটি প্রসিদ্ধ গল্প নিয়ে টোমাস মান্ তাঁর একটি রূপকনির্ভর উপন্যাস রচনা করেছেন।

শুকসপ্ততিকথার প্রভাবও বাইরে বিস্তৃত হয়েছিলো। শুকসপ্ততিকথার দুটোভাষী
কাহিনী (Naughty Wives' Tales) পৃথিবীর সকল দেশেই আছে। ফারসী গ্রন্থ
তুতিনামার গল্পে শুকসপ্ততিকথার ছায়া যথেষ্ট স্পষ্ট। চণ্ডীচরণ মুন্সী 'তোতাইতিহাস' নাম
দিয়ে বাংলায় এই বইটি অনুবাদ করেছিলেন। আর্যসূরের জাতকমালার শিবজাতকের
প্রভাব চৈনিক এবং মুসলিম গল্পে লক্ষণীয়। চীনে ভাষায় বহু ভারতীয় গল্পের, বিশেষ
ক'রে বৌদ্ধ গল্পের, অনুবাদ ভারত-চীন ধর্মসংস্কৃতির বিনিময় ও যোগাযোগের কালে
সম্পাদিত হয়েছিলো।

THE premature death of Dr. Sashibhusan Dasgupta has deeply affected his friends and admirers everywhere. A scholar, a gentleman, and a very dear friend of Comparative Literature in India, he had been since 1955 the Ramtanu Laharry Professor of modern Indian languages of Calcutta University. He enjoyed a great reputation among his friends and colleagues, and the spirit with which, even from his sick-bed, he insisted on carrying on with his responsibilities revealed his complete dedication. Around him bustled research students and scholars, pedants and pupils. When for a few days he took leave last year and went to London for a lecture tour, he discovered in the collection of Dr. Arnold Bake, a Western authority on Oriental music, forty hitherto unknown examples of the very early Bengali lyrics suggesting the 'missing link' between the older and later forms of Bengali language. He died much too early to make full use of this discovery.

Busy scholar, critic, Chairman of a large department at the oldest university of this country, Dr. Dasgupta found time to write poetry as well. His poetic output may not have been large, but it provided a clear indication that basically he had a very artistic mind which can hardly be said about most scholars. He sang devotional songs beautifully, and his humanism was contagious. I know of a young man to whom Dr. Dasgupta offered a teaching job in Calcutta University at a time when the former had only an M.A. degree from a new university, and that too in the much maligned discipline of Comparative Literature. A man steeped in classical learning, and religious in a very traditional sense, Dr. Dasgupta had an unsuspected modern mind. His publications include: *Some Obscure Religious Cults as Background of Bengali Literature*, *Bhāratiya Sāadhanār Ōikya*, *Bhārater Śakti Sāadhanā o Śākta Sāhitya*, *Tolstoy-Gandhi-Rabindranath*, *Sri Rādhār Kramabikāsh*, *Bānglā Sāhityer Navayug*, and *Nishā Thākurer Kaḍchā*.

Born in 1911, he passed away on the 21st of July, 1964.

—Pranabendu Dasgupta

II

Prior to 1956 Comparative Literature was simply an unknown discipline in Asia, outside Japan, though back in 1906 the National Council of Education at Jadavpur, which has developed through the years into the present university, had the refreshing courage of inviting Rabindranath Tagore for delivering a lecture on this very subject, at that time hardly a decade old even in the Western countries. Tagore gave full support to the unconventional idea of Comparative Literature, and yet nothing was done for half a century to introduce the discipline anywhere. Even today, there is considerable lack of information and understanding regarding its standing as an academically sound field of studies. We propose, therefore, to publish notes on activities in various departments of Comparative Literature in the world, including, of course, our own.

This department at Jadavpur was established in 1956 with Professor Buddhadeva Bose as its Chairman. The first M.A. examination was held in 1958, and B.A. two years later. 44 students to date have been awarded M.A. and 9 B.A. (Honours) degrees. Six from among our alumni have received fellowships or teaching-assistantships for higher studies in the U.S.A. and France. A fuller report about their work abroad will be published in the next number of *JJCL*. The number of students taking interest in this discipline is increasing from year to year.

The undergraduate and postgraduate courses of this department are conceived as complimentary, with overlappings cut to a minimum, the first constituting a broad historical survey, while the second concentrates on particular themes, genres, and movements. But while the undergraduate course is designed to provide the best possible preparation for the postgraduate course, the latter may also be regarded as a course in its own right to be taken by students with undergraduate studies in other disciplines. The undergraduate course comprises a first paper which surveys Indian Classical and Western Classical literatures, plus an introduction to the Bible; then four papers which cover Western literature from the middle ages to the twentieth century; two papers which survey Bengali literature from its origins to Rabindranath Tagore and after; and a final paper divided between Bengali theory and technique of literature, and an essay in Bengali on a literary topic from a comparatist point of view. The postgraduate course offers a choice of seven topics which have so far included:

- I—(a) "The influence of Sanskrit literature on Medieval Bengali literature;" or,

- (b) "The influence of Sanskrit literature on modern Bengali literature."
- II—(a) "Dante and medieval European literature;" or,
(b) "The Classical tradition in English and French literature."
- III—(a) "The influence of Western literature on 19th century Bengali literature;" or,
(b) "The influence of Western literature on 20th century Bengali literature."
- IV—(a) "The European epic;" or,
(b) "The nineteenth century Western novel."
- V— "Romantic drama from Shakespeare to Hugo."
- VI—(a) "The literature of the Enlightenment;" or,
(b) "Goethe."
- VII— "Romanticism and Symbolism in 19th century Western poetry."

A final paper requires an essay in English or Bengali from a choice of literary topics. At least two of the papers must be answered in English, and two in Bengali; the rest may be answered in either language. Alternative papers on Rabindranath (in English translation), and Sanskrit and Greek drama, to be answered in English, are being devised for non-Bengali students to replace the Bengali papers.

—*David McCutcheon*

III

For the benefit of our Indian readers, here is a brief report on Comparative Literature in the United States. Our next number will include a review of similar programmes in France, Germany, and Japan.

The following universities in the United States, among others, offer B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in Comparative Literature:

- Boston University (Chairman of the department—Angello Bertocci)
- Brandeis University (Chairman—W. W. Holdheim)
- Brooklyn College (Chairman—William H. Stahl)
- Columbia University (Chairman—Lewis Leary)
- University of California, Berkeley (Chairman—Warren Ramsey)
- The City College of New York (Chairman—Ludwig W. Kahn)
- Indiana University (Chairman—Horst Frenz)

Michigan State University (Chairman—Herbert Weisinger)
 University of North Carolina (Chairman—Werner P. Friederich)
 Northwestern University (Chairman—Peter Rudy)
 Occidental College (Chairman—Kenneth Oliver)
 Queens College (Chairman—Konrad Gries)
 University of Southern California (Chairman—David H. Malone)
 Washington University (Chairman—Liselotte Dieckmann)
 University of Wisconsin, Madison (Chairman—Gian N. G. Orsini)
 University of Washington (Chairman—Frank W. Jones)

Some of the universities where only M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are granted:

University of Chicago (Chairman—H. Stefan Schultz)
 Cornell University (Chairman—Paul M. de Man)
 Harvard University (Chairman—Harry Levin)
 University of Illinois (Chairman—Philip M. Mitchell)
 State University of Iowa (Chairman—Ralph Freedman)
 University of Michigan (Chairman—Otto G. Graf)
 University of Minnesota (Chairman—Eugene H. Falk)
 The Pennsylvania State University (Chairman—Philip A. Shelley)
 Rutgers—The State University (Chairman—John O. McCormick)

—The following universities offer only Ph.D. programmes in Comparative Literature:

University of Colorado (Chairman—José de Onís)
 New York University (Chairman—Robert J. Clements)
 University of Oregon (Chairman—Chandler Beall)
 Princeton University (Chairman—Victor Lange)
 Vanderbilt University (Chairman—H. Lloyd Stow)
 Yale University (Chairman—René Wellek)

Many more universities in the United States offer Comparative Literature programmes, and the list published here is not intended to be a complete one. The following notes are added for indicating what kind of work is being done in some of the universities mentioned above.

University of California, Berkeley: The department was established in 1948. Courses offered include—(a) "Romanticism in Western

Europe," (b) "The cultural background of the Renaissance movement in the Western European countries with special reference to Italy," (c) "The Symbolist Movement in European literature," (d) "Methods of study in Comparative Literature," and (e) "The Medieval mind." A few of the Master's theses completed at this university: *Baudelaire and T. S. Eliot*, A. V. Kahn; *Heroic Character in Indian, Greek and Latin Epics*, Radha Rajagopal Sloss; and *Conceptions of Pure Poetry in French and English from Poe to Yeats and Valéry*, Karl David Uitti. In 1960 there were 21 candidates for the M.A. in Comparative Literature.

The University of Chicago : H. Stefan Schultz wrote in the *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, vol. XX: 'The practice of comparative studies at this university is probably as old as the University itself.' The purpose of these studies was 'to make it possible for students primarily interested in literature (not in philology nor in linguistics) to pursue programmes of study in fields which involve a combination of two or more special literatures.' Types of programmes were: (a) the study of a period of literature, (b) the study of a literary form, and (c) the study of a tradition of thought or taste.

Harvard University : Course programme includes: (a) 'Comedy on the Stage,' (b) 'Introduction to Oral Literature,' (c) 'The Romantic Lyric,' (d) 'Valéry, Rilke, Yeats,' (e) 'The Shape and Content of Classical Drama,' (f) 'Origins of the Romantic Novel,' (g) 'Thematics,' (h) 'The Symbolist Movement,' and (i) 'The Literature of Folly in the Renaissance.' The average time required for receiving the A.M. degree is one to two years, and the Ph.D. degree four to five years. Professor Levin, the Chairman of the department, is also the first Babbitt Professor of Comparative Literature. "Harvard Studies in Comparative Literature" series includes books like (a) *Three Philosophical Poets: Lucretius, Dante, and Goethe*, George Santayana, (b) *Chivalry in English Literature: Chaucer, Malory, Spenser and Shakespeare*, W. H. Schofield, (c) *English Literature and Culture in Russia (1553-1840)*, Ernest J. Simmons, (d) *The Testament of Werther in Poetry and Drama*, Stuart Pratt Atkins, and (e) *On Translation*, ed. Reuben A. Bower. Some recent Ph.D. dissertations finished at Harvard: "The Prose Poem: A Study of a Genre in Nineteenth Century European Literature" by John I. Simon; "Icarus: The Self-Image of the Artist in French Literature (1820-1870)" by Maurice Z. Shroder; "The Post-Romantic Predicament: A Study in the Poetry of Mallarmé and Yeats" by Paul de Man; "Myth, Rite, and Symbol in Odyssey" by Howard W. Clarke; "The Use of the Theatre for the presentation of Mytho-